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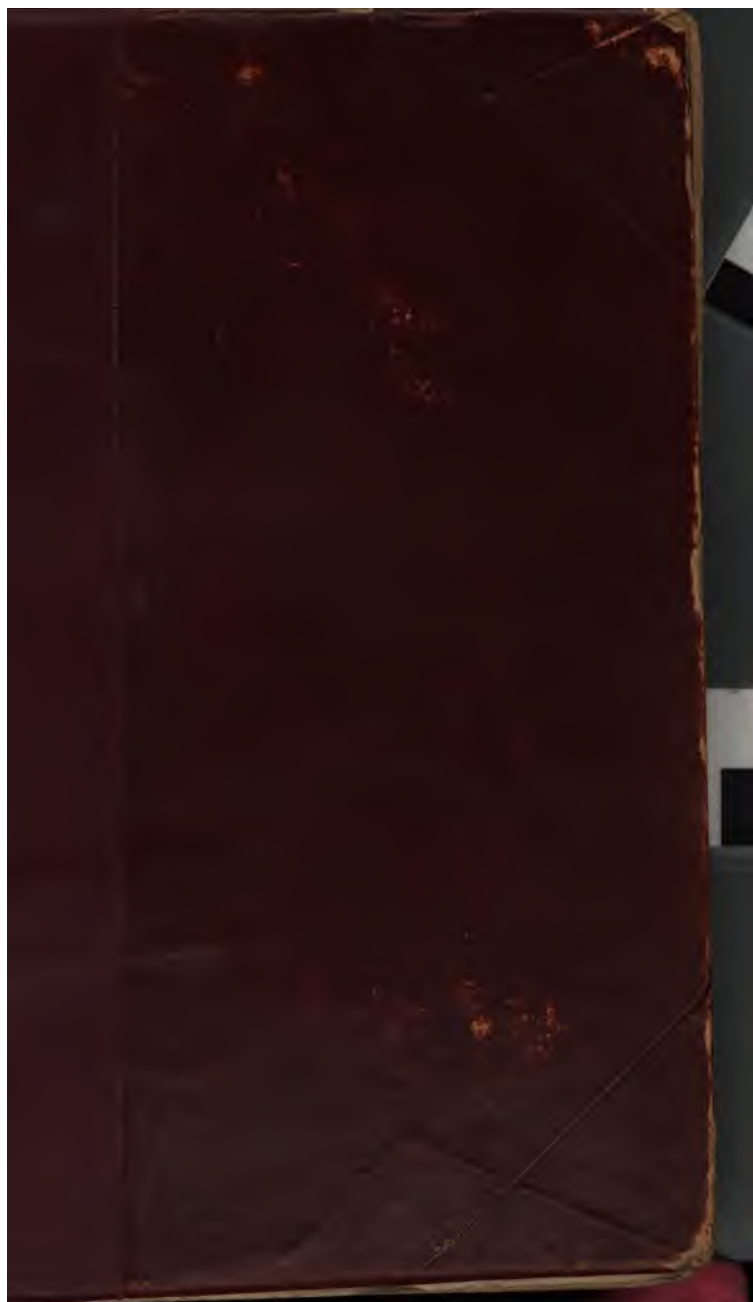
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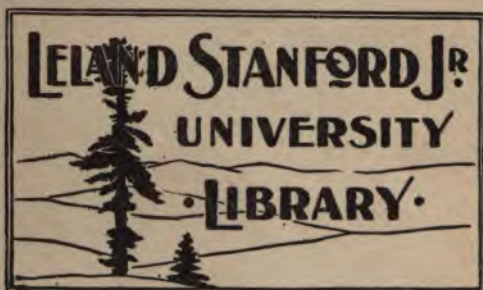
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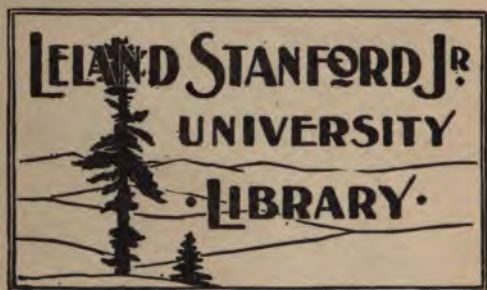
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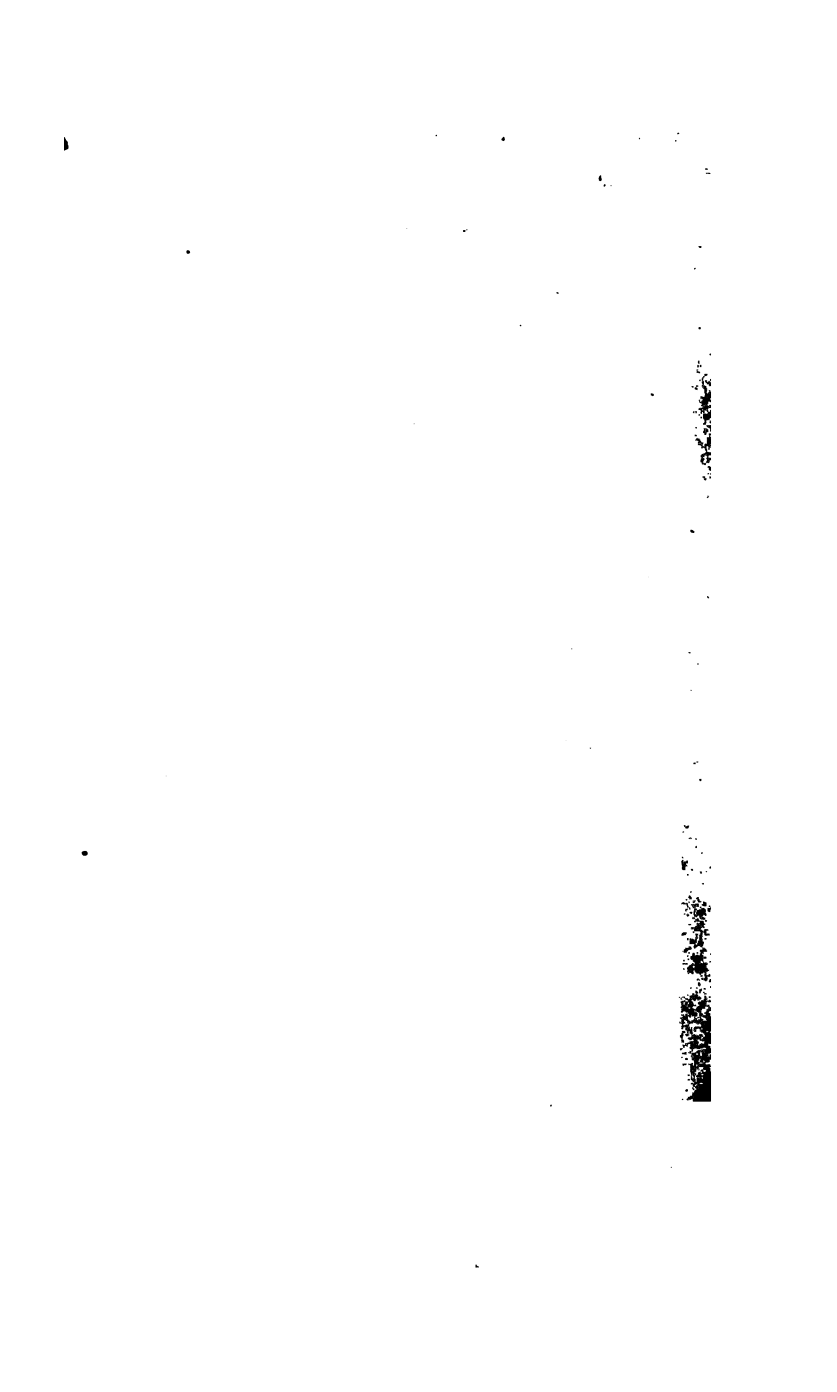


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SIDONIA

THE SORCERESS;

THE

SUPPOSED DESTROYER OF THE WHOLE REIGNING
DUCAL HOUSE OF POMERANIA.

BY WILLIAM MEINHOLD,

AUTHOR OF "THE AMBER WITCH."

IN TWO VOLS.

VOL. II.

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SIDONIA THE SORCERESS:

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW SIDONIA MAKES POOR CLARA APPEAR QUITE DEAD, AND OF THE GREAT MOURNING AT SAATZIG OVER HER BURIAL, WHILE SIDONIA DANCES ON HER COFFIN AND SINGS THE 109TH PSALM.—ITEM, OF THE SERMON AND THE ANATHEMA PRONOUNCED UPON A WICKED SINNER FROM THE ALTAR OF THE CHURCH.

I MUST first state that this horrible wickedness of Sidonia, which no eye had seen nor ear heard, neither had it entered into the heart of man to conceive (for only in hell could such have been imagined) never would have come to light but that she herself made confession thereof to Dr. Cramero, thy well-beloved god-father, in her last trial. And he, to show how far Satan can lead a poor human creature who has once fallen from God, related the same to my worthy father-in-law, Master David Reutzio, some time superintendent at the criminal court, from whose own lips I received the story.

And this was her confession:—That when the messenger returned from Daber with the broth, he had ridden so fast that it was still, in truth, quite hot, but she (the horrible Sidonia) who was standing at the bed of the young mother, along with the other women, pretended that it was too cold for a woman in her state, and must just get one little heating on the fire.

The poor Clara, indeed, showed unwillingness to permit this, but she ran down with it, and secretly, without being

seen by any of the other women, poured in a philtrum that had been given her by the gipsy-hag, and then went back again for a moment. This philtrum was the one which produced all the appearance of death. It had no taste, except, perhaps, that it was a little saltish. Therefore Clara perceived nothing wrong, only when she tasted it, said, "My heart's dearest mother, in her joy, has put a little too much salt into her broth; still what a heart-dearest mother sends, must always taste good!" However, in one hour after that, Clara lay as stiff and cold as a corpse, only her breath came a little; but even this ceased in a short time, and then a great cry and lamentation resounded through the whole castle. No one suspected Sidonia, for many said that young women died so often; but even the old mother, who arrived a few hours after, and hearing the cries from the castle while she was yet far off, began to weep likewise; for her mother's heart revealed the cause to her ere she had yet descended from the carriage.

But it was a sadder sight next evening, when the husband arrived at the castle from Wollin. He could not take his eyes from the corpse. One while he kissed the infant, then fixed his eyes again upon his dead wife, and sighed and groaned as if he lay upon the rack. He alone suspected Sidonia, but when she cried more than they all, and wrung her hands, exclaiming, who would have pity on her now, for her best friend lay there dead! and flung herself upon the seeming corpse, kissing it and bedewing it with her tears, and praying to have leave to watch all night beside it, for how could she sleep in her sore grief and sorrow? the knight was ashamed of his suspicions, and even tried to comfort her himself.

Then came the physicians out of Stargard and other places, who had been summoned in all haste, and they gabbled away, saying: "It could not have been the broth, but puerperal fever." This at least was Dr. Hamster's opinion, who knew all along it would be a bad case. Indeed the last time he was at the castle visiting the mower's wife, he was frightened at the look of the poor lady. Still if they had only sent for him in time, this great evil could not have happened, for his *pulvis antispasmodicus* was never known

to fail; and so he went on chattering, by which one can see that doctors have always been the same from that time even till now.

Summa.—On the third day the poor Clara was laid in her coffin, and carried to her grave, with such weeping and lamentation of the mourners and bearers as never had been heard till then. And all the nobles of the vicinage, with the knights and gentlemen, came to attend her funeral at Saatzig Cathedral, for she was to be buried in this new church just finished by his Grace Duke Johann, and but one corpse had been laid in the vaults before her.*

But what does the devil's sorceress do now? She knew that the poor Clara would awake the next day (which was Sunday) about noon, and if any should hear her cries, her plans would be detected. Therefore, about ten of the clock, she ran to Marcus, with her hair all flowing down her shoulders, saying, that he must let her away that very day to Zachow, for what would the world say if she, a young unmarried thing, should remain here all alone with him in his castle? No; sooner would she swallow the bitter cup her father had left her than peril her name. But first, would he allow her to go and pray alone in the church? Surely he would not deny her this.

Thereupon the simple knight gave her instant leave: "Let her go and pray, in God's name. He himself would soon be there to hear the Reverend Dr. Wudargensis preach the funeral sermon over his heart's dear wife. And after service he would desire a carriage to be in readiness to convey her to Zachow."

Then he called to the warder from the window, bidding him let Sidonia pass. So she went forth in deep mourning garments, glided through the castle gardens, and concealing herself by the trees, slipped into the church without any one having perceived her; for the sexton had left the door open to admit fresh air, on account of the corpse. Then she stepped over to the little grated door near the altar, which led down into the vault, and softly lifting it, stepped down,

* The beautifully painted escutcheon of Duke Johann and his wife Erdmuth of Brandenburg, is still to be seen on the chancel windows of this stately staircase.

drawing the door down again close over her head. Clara's coffin was lying beneath, and first she laid her ear on it and listened, but all was quite still within. Then removing the pall, she sat herself down upon the lid. Time passed, and still no sound. The sexton began to ring the bell, and the people were assembling in the church above. Soon the hymn commenced, "Now in peace the loved one sleepeth," and ere the first verse had ended, a knocking was heard in the coffin, then a cry: "Where am I? What brought me here? Let me out, for God's sake let me out! I am not dead. Where is my child? Where is my good Marcus? Ah! there is some one near me. Who is it? Let me out! let me out!" Then (oh! horror of horrors!) the devil's harlot on her coffin, answered: "It is I, Sidonia! this pays thee for acting the spy at Wolgast. Lie there, and writhe till thou art stifled in thy blood!" Now the voice came again from the coffin, praying and beseeching, so that many times it went through her stony heart like a sword. And just then the first verse of the hymn ended, and the voice of the priest was heard asking the lord governor whether they should go and sing the remainder over the vault of his dear spouse, for it was indeed sung in her honour, seeing she had been ever a mother to the orphan, and a holy, pious, and Christian wife; or, since the people all knew her worth, and mourned for her with bitter mourning, should they sing it here in the nave, that the whole congregation might join in chorus?*

To this the governor, in a loud yet mournful voice, gave answer—

"Alas, good friends, do what you will in this sad case; I am content."

But Sidonia, this devil's witch, was in a horrible fright lest the priest would come up to the altar to sing the hymn, and so hear the knocking within the coffin. However the devil protects his own, for, at that instant, many voices called out—

"Let the hymn be sung here, that we may all join to the honour of the blessed soul of the good lady."

* These interrup-

tions unusual at that period.

And mournfully the second verse was heard pealing through the church, from the lips of the whole congregation, so that poor Clara's groans were quite smothered. For, when the voice of her dear husband reached her ear, she had knocked and cried out with all her strength—

"Marcus! Marcus! Alas, dear Lord, will you not come to me!" Then again—"Sidonia, by the Jesu cross, I pray thee have pity on me! Save me—save me—I am stifling. Oh, run for some one, if thou canst not lift the lid thyself!"

But the devil made answer to the poor living corpse—

"Dost thou take me for a silly fool like thyself, that I should now undo all I have done?"

And as the voice went on from the coffin, but feebler and fainter—

"Think on my husband—on my child, Sidonia!"

She answered—

"Didst thou think of that when, but for thee, I might have been a Duchess of Pomerania, and the proud mother of a prince, in place of being as I now am.

Then all became still within the coffin, and Sidonia sprang up on it and danced, chanting the 109th psalm;* and as she came to the words—"Let none shew mercy to him; let none have pity on his orphans; let his posterity be cut off and his name be blotted out," there was a loud knocking again within the coffin, and a faint, stifled cry—"I am dying!" then followed a gurgling sound, and all

* Superstition has found many sinful usages for this psalm. The Jews, for example, took a new vessel, poured a mixture of mustard and water therein, and after repeating this psalm over it for three consecutive days, poured it out before the door of their enemy, as a certain means to ensure his destruction. In the middle ages monks and nuns were frequently obliged to repeat it in superstitious ceremonies, at the command of some powerful revengeful man. And that its efficacy was considered as something miraculously powerful, even by the evangelical church, is proved by this example of Sidonia, who made frequent use of this terrible psalm in her sorceries, as any one may see by referring to the records of the trial in Dähnert. And other interesting examples are found in the treatise of Joh. Andreas Schmidii, *Abusus Psalmi 109 imprecatorii*; vulgo, *The Death Prayer*. Helmstadt, 1708.

became still. At that moment the congregation above raised the last verse of the hymn:—

“In the grave, with bitter weeping,
Loving hands have laid her down;
There she resteth, calmly sleeping,
Till an angel lifts the stone.”

But the sermon which now followed she remembered her life long. It was on the tears, the soft tears of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And, as her spirit became oppressed by the silence in the vault, now that all was still within the coffin, she lifted the lid after the exordium, to see if Clara were indeed quite dead.

It was an easy matter to remove the cover, for the screws were not fastened; but—oh, God! what has she beheld? A sight that will never more leave her brain! The poor corpse lay all torn and disfigured from the writhings in the coffin, and a blood-vessel must have burst at last to relieve her from her agony, for the blood lay yet warm on the hands as she lifted the cover. But more horrible than all were the fixed glassy eyes of the corpse, staring immovably upon her, from which clear tears were yet flowing, and blending with the blood upon the cheek; and, as if the priest above had known what was passing beneath, he exclaimed—

“Oh, let us moisten our couch with tears; let tears be our meat, day and night. They are noble tears that do not fall to earth, but ascend up to God’s throne. Yea, the Lord gathers them in his vials, like costly wine. They are noble tears, for if they fill the eyes of God’s chosen in this life, yet, in that other world, the Lord Jesus will wipe away tears from off all faces, as the dew is dried by the morning sun. Oh, wondrous beauty of those eyes which are dried by the Lord Jesus! Oh, blessed eyes! Oh, sun-clear eyes. Oh, joyful and ever-smiling eyes!”

She heard no more, but felt the eyes of the corpse were upon her, and fell down like one dead beside the coffin; and Clara’s eyes and the sermon never left her brain from that day, and often have they risen before her in dreams.

But the Holy Spirit had yet a greater torment in store for her, if that were possible.

For, after the sermon, a consistorium was held in the church upon a grievous sinner named Trina Wolken, who, it appeared, had many times done penance for her unchaste life, but had in no wise amended. And she heard the priest asking—"Who accuseth this woman?" To which, after a short silence, a deep small voice responded—

"I accuse her; for I detected her in sin, and though I besought her with Christian words to turn from her evil ways, and that I would save her from public shame if she would so turn, yet she gave herself up wholly to the devil, and out of revenge bewitched my best sheep, so that it died the very day after it had brought forth a lamb. Alas! what will become of the poor lamb! And it was such a beautiful little lamb!"

When Marcus Bork, heard this, he began to sob aloud; and each word seemed to run like a sharp dagger through Sidonia's heart, so that she bitterly repented her evil deeds. And all the congregation broke out into loud weeping, and even the priest continued, in a broken voice, to ask the sinner what she had to say to this terrible accusation.

Upon which a woman's voice was heard swearing, that all was a malignant lie, for her accuser was a shameless liar and open sinner, who wished to ruin her because she had refused his son.

Then the priest commanded the witnesses to be called, not only to prove the unchastity but also the witchcraft. And after this, she was asked if she could make good the loss of the sheep? No; she had no money. And the people testified also that the harlot had nothing but her shame. Thereupon the priest rose up, and said—

"That she had long been notorious in the Christian communion for her wicked life, and that all her penance and repentance having proved but falsehood and deceit, he was commissioned by the honourable consistorium, to pronounce upon her the solemn curse and sentence of excommunication. For she had this day been convicted of strange and terrible crimes, on the testimony of competent witnesses. There-

fore he called upon the whole Christian congregation to stand up and listen to the words of the anathema, by which he gave over Trina Wolken to the devil, in the name of the Almighty God."

And as he spoke the curse, it fell word by word upon the head of Sidonia, as if he were indeed pronouncing it over herself—

"Dear Christian friends—Because Trina Wolken hath broken her baptismal vows, and given herself over to the devil, to work all uncleanness with greediness; and though divers times admonished to repentance by the church, yet hath stiffened her neck in corruption, and hardened her heart in unrighteousness, therefore we herewith place the said Trina Wolken under the bann of the excommunication. Henceforth she is a thing accursed—cast off from the communion of the church, and participation in the holy sacraments. Henceforth she is given up to Satan for this life and the next, unless the blessed Saviour reach forth his hand to her as he did to the sinking Peter, for all things are possible with God. And this we do by the power of the keys granted by Christ to his church, to bind and loose on earth as in heaven, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

And now Sidonia heard distinctly the screams of the wretched sinner, as she was hunted out of the church, and all the congregation followed soon after, and then all was still above.

Now, indeed, terror took such hold of her that she trembled like an aspen leaf, and the lid fell many times from her hand with great clatter on the ground, as she tried to replace it on the coffin. For she had closed her eyes, for fear of meeting the ghastly stare of the corpse again. At last she got it up, and the corpse was covered; but she would not stay to replace the screws, only hastened out of the vault, closing the little grated door after her, reached the church door, which had no lock but only a latch, and plunged into the castle gardens to hide herself amongst the trees.

Here she remained crouched for some hours, trying to recover her self-possession; and when she found that she

could weep as well as ever when it pleased her, she set off for the castle, and met her cousin Marcus with loud weeping and lamentations, entreating him to let her go that instant to Zachow. Eat and drink could she not from grief, though she had eaten nothing the whole morning. So the mournful knight, who had himself risen from the table without eating, to hasten to his little motherless lamb, asked her where she had passed the morning, for he had not seen her in the church? To which she answered, that she had sunk down almost dead on the altar-steps; and, as he seemed to doubt her, she repeated part of the sermon, and spoke of the curse pronounced upon the girl, and told how she had remained behind in the church, to weep and pray alone. Upon which he exclaimed joyfully—

“Now, I thank God, that my blessed spouse counselled me to take thee home with us. Ah! I see that thou hast indeed repented of thy sins. Go thy ways, then; and, with God’s help, thou shalt never want a true and faithful friend while I live.”

He bid her also take all his blessed wife’s wardrobe with her, amongst which was a brocaded damask with citron flowers, which she had only got a year before; item, her shoes and kerchiefs: summa, all that she had worn, he wished never to see them again. And so she went away in haste from the castle, after having given a farewell kiss to the little motherless lamb. For though the evil spirit Chim, which she carried under her mantle, whispered to her to give the little bastard a squeeze that would make him follow his mother, or to let him do so, she would not consent, but pinched him for his advice till he squalled, though Marcus certainly could not have heard him, for he was attending Sidonia to the coach; but then the good knight was so absorbed in grief that he had neither ears nor eyes for anything.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW SIDONIA IS CHASED BY THE WOLVES TO REHEWINKEL, AND FINDS JOHANN APPELMANN AGAIN IN THE INN, WITH WHOM SHE GOES AWAY A SECOND TIME BY NIGHT.

WHEN Sidonia left Saatzig, the day was far advanced, so that the good knight recommended her to stop at Daber that night with his blessed wife's mourning parents, and, for this purpose, sent a letter by her to them. Also he gave a fine one-year old foal in charge to the coachman, who tied it to the side of the carriage; and Marcus bid him deliver it up safely to the pastor of Rehwinkel, his good friend, for he had only been keeping the young thing at grass for him, and the pastor now wished it back—they must, therefore, go by Rehwinkel. So they drove away, but many strange things happened by reason of this same foal; for it was so restive and impatient at being tied, that many times they had to stop and quiet it, lest the poor beast might get hurt by the wheel.

This so delayed their journey, that evening came on before they were out of the forest; and as the sun went down, the wolves began to appear in every direction. Finally, a pack of ten or twelve pursued the carriage; and though the coachman whipped his horses with might and main, still the wolves gained on them, and stared up in their faces, licking their jaws with their red tongues. Some even were daring enough to spring up behind the carriage, but finding nothing but trunks, had to tumble down again.

This so terrified Sidonia that she screamed and shrieked, and, drawing forth a knife, cut the cords that bound the foal, which instantly galloped away, and the wolves after it. How the carl drove now, thinking to get help in time to save the poor foal! but not so. The poor beast, in its terror, galloped into the town of Rehwinkel; and as the paddock is closed, it springs into the churchyard, the wolves after it, and runs into the belfry-tower, the door of which is

Now Sidonia scarcely believed the knave; so she called one of his comrades aside, and asked him was it true, and where they came from. Upon which he confirmed all that Johann had said: "The devil had dispersed the whole band, so that only two were left with the captain, himself and Konnemann; and they came from Nörenburg, where the master had been striking a bargain with Elias von Wedel, for a town in Poland. The town was called Lembrowo, and there was a stately castle there, as grand almost as the castle of old Dewitz at Daber. They were going this very night to Bruchhausen, to get gold from the old stiff-neck of Stargard, that so the bargain might be concluded next day.

This was a pleasant hearing for Sidonia. She became more friendly, and said, "He could not blame her for doubting him, as he had deceived her so often; still it was wonderful how her heart clung to him through all. Where had he been so long? and what had happened since they parted?"

Hereupon he answered—"That he could not speak while the people were all going to and fro in the inn; but if she came out with him (as the night was fine), they could walk down to the river-side, and he would tell her all."

Summa.—She went with him, and they sat down upon the green grass to discourse, never knowing that the pastor of Rehewinkel was hid behind the next tree: for he had gone forth to lament over the loss of his poor foal, and sat there weeping bitterly. He had got it home to sell, that he might buy a warm coat for the winter, which now he cannot do; therefore the old man had gone forth mournfully into the clear night, thrown himself down, and wept.

By this chance he heard the whole story from my knave, and related it afterwards to the old burgomaster in Stargard. It was as follows:—

Some time after his flight from Daber, a friend from Stettin told him that Dinnies von Kleist (the same who had spoiled their work in the Uckermund forest) had got a great sum of gold in his knapsack, and was off to his castle at Dame,* while the rest were feasting at Daber. This sum

* A town near Polzin, in Lower Pomerania, and an ancient feudal hold of the Kleists.

he had won by a wager from the Princes of Saxony, Brandenburg, and Mecklenburg. For he had bet, at table, that he would carry five casks of Italian wine at once, and without help, up from the cellar to the dining-hall, in the castle of old Stettin. Duke Johann refused the bet, knowing his man well, but the others took it up; upon which, after grace, the whole noble company stood up and accompanied him to the cellar. Here Dinnies took up a cask under each arm, another in each hand by the plugs, and a fifth between his teeth by the plug also; thus laden, he carried the five casks up every step from the cellar to the dining-hall. So the money was paid to him, as the lacqueys witnessed, and having put the same in his knapsack, he set off for his castle at Dame, to give it to his father. And the knave went on: "After I heard this news from my good friend, I resolved to set off for Dame and revenge myself on this strong ox, burn his castle, and take his gold. The band agreed; but, woe, alas! there was one traitor amongst them. The fellow was called Kaff, and I might well have suspected him; for latterly I observed that when we were about any business, particularly church robbing, he tried to be off, and asked to be left to keep the watch. Divers nights, too, as I passed him, there was the carl praying; and so I ought to have dismissed the coward knave at once, or he would have had half the band praying likewise before long.

"In short, this arrant villain slips off at night from his post, just as we had all set ourselves down before the castle, waiting for the darkest hour of midnight to attack the foxes in their den, and betrays the whole business to Kleist himself, telling him the strength of the band, and how and when we were to attack him, with all other particulars. Whereupon a great lamentation was heard in the castle, and old Kleist, a little white-headed man, wrung his hands, and seemed ready to go mad with fear; for half the retainers were at the annual fair, others far away at the coal-mines, and, finally, they could scarcely muster in all ten fighting men. Besides this, the castle fosse was filled with rubbish, though the old man had been bidding his sons, for the last year, to get it cleared, but they never minded him, the idle

knaves. All this troubled stout Dinnies mightily; and as he walked up and down the hall, his eyes often rested on a painting which represented the devil cutting off the head of a gambler, and flying with it out of the window.

"Again and again he looked at the picture, then called out for a hound, stuck him under his arm, and cut off his head, as if it had been only a dove; then he called for a calf from the stall, put it under his arm likewise, and cut off the head. Then he asked for the mask which represented the devil, and which he had got from Stettin to frighten his dissolute brothers, when they caroused too late over their cups. The young Johann, indeed, had sometimes dropped the wine-flask by reason of it, but Detloff still ran after the young maidens as much as ever, though even he had got such a fright that there was hope for his poor soul yet. So the mask was brought, and all the proper disguise to play the devil—namely, a yellow jerkin slashed with black, a red mantle, and a large wooden horse's foot.

"When Dinnies beheld all this, and the man who played the devil instructed him how to put them on, he rejoiced greatly, and declared that now he alone could save the castle. I knew nothing of all this at the time," said Johann, "nor of the treason, neither did the band. We were all seated under a shed in the wood, that had been built for the young deer in the winter time, and had stuck a lantern against the wall while we gamed and drank, and our provider poured us out large mugs of the best beer, when, just at midnight, we heard a report like a clap of thunder outside, so that the earth shook under us (it was no thunder-clap, however, but an explosion of powder, which the traitor had laid down all round the shed, for we found the trace of it next day).

"And as we all sprang up, in strode the devil himself bodily, with his horse's foot and cock's feathers, and a long calf's tail, making the most horrible grimaces, and shaking his long hair at us. Fire came out of his mouth and nostrils, and roaring like a wild boar, he seized the little dwarf (whom you may remember, Sidonia), tucked him under his arm like a cock—and just as he was uttering a *curse over his good game* being interrupted—and cut his

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H E S O R C E R E S S ;

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all right. There were men in there from Stargard, who said they had brought gold for the young burgomaster.

Marry! how my knave jumped down from the carriage, and brought Sidonia along with him, bidding Pruski to stay and watch the things. But, behold as my knave entered, six men seized him, bound him firmly, and bid him sit down quietly on a bench by the table, till his father arrived. So he cursed and swore, but this was no help to him, and when Sidonia saw that she had been deceived again, she tried to slip out and get to the carriage, but the men stopped her, saying unless she wished a pair of handcuffs on, she had better sit down quietly on another bench opposite Johann. And she asked in vain what all this meant. Item, my knave asked in vain, but no one answered them.

They had not long been waiting, when a carriage stopped before the door, more voices were heard, and alas! who should enter but the old burgomaster himself, with Mag. Vito, Diaconus of St. Johns? And after them came the executioner, with six assistants bearing a black coffin.

My knave now turned as white as a corpse, and trembled like an aspen leaf; no word could he utter, but fell with his back against the wall. Then a dead silence reigned throughout the chamber, and Sidonia looked as white as her paramour.

When the assistants had placed the coffin on the ground, the old father advanced to the table, and spake thus:—
“Oh, thou fallen and godless child! thou thrice lost son! how often have I sought to turn thee from evil, and trusted in thy promises; but in place of better, thou hast grown worse, and wickedness has increased in thee day by day, as poison in the young viper. On thy infamous hands lie so many robberies, murders, and seductions, that they cannot be reckoned. I speak not of past years, for then truly the night would not be long enough to count them; I speak only of thy last deeds in Poland, as old Elias von Wedel related them to me yesterday in Stargard. Deny, if thou darest, here in the face of thy death and thy coffin, how thou didst join thyself to the Lansquenets in Poland, and then along with two vile fellows got entrance into Lembrowo,

telling the old castellan, Elias von Wedel, that thou wast a labourer, upon which he took thee into his service. But at night, thou (oh, wicked son!) didst rise up and beat the old Elias almost unto death, demanding all his money, which, when he refused, thou and thy robber villains seized his cattle and his horses, and drove them away with thee. Item, canst thou deny that on meeting the same old Elias at Norenberg by the hunt in the forest, thou didst mock him, and ask would he sell his castle of Lembrowo in Poland, for thou wouldst buy it of him, seeing thy father had promised thee plenty of gold?

"Item, canst thou deny having written me a threatening letter, declaring that if by this very night a hundred dollars were not sent to thee here at Bruchhausen, a red beacon should rise up from my sheepfolds and barns, which meant nothing else than that thou wouldst burn the whole good town of Stargard, for thou knowest well that all the sheepfolds and barns of the burghers adjoin one to the other? Canst thou deny this, oh thou lost son? if so, deny it now."

Here Johann began again with his old knavery. He wept, and threw himself on the ground, crawling under the table to get to his father's feet, then howled forth, that he repented of his sins, and would lead a better life truly for the future, if his hard stern father would only forgive him now.

But Sidonia screamed aloud, and as the burgomaster in his sorrow had not observed her before, he turned his eyes now on her, and exclaimed:—"Woe, alas! thou godless son, hast thou this noble maiden with thee yet? I thought she was at Saatzig, or perchance thou hast made her thy wife?"

Ille.—"Alas, no; but he would marry her soon, to make amends for the wrong he had done her."

Hic.—"This thou hast ten times promised, but in vain, and thy sins have increased a hundredfold; because, like all profligates, thou hast shunned the holy estate of matrimony, and preferred to wallow in the mire of unchastity, with any one who fell in the way of thy adulterous and licentious eyes."

Ille.—"Alas! his heart's dearest father was right, but

he would amend his evil life; and, in proof of it, let the reverend deacon, M. Vitus, here present, wed him now instantly to Sidonia."

Hic.—"It is too late. I counsel thee rather to wed thy poor soul to the holy Saviour, like the repentant thief on the cross. See—here is a priest, and there is a coffin."

Here the executioner broke in upon the old, deeply-afflicted father, telling him the coffin was too short, as, indeed, his worship had told him, but he would not believe the young man was so tall. Where could he put the head? It must be stuck between his feet, or under his arm, cried out another. So some proposed one thing and some another, till a great uproar arose.

Upon which, the old mourning father cried out—

"Do you want to break my heart? Is there not time enough to talk of this after?"

Then he turned again to his profligate son, and asked him—

"Would he not repent, and take the holy body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as a passport with him on this long journey? If so, let him go into the little room and pray with the priest, and repent of his sins; there was yet time."

Ille.—"Alas, he had repented already. What had he ever done so wicked, that his own bodily father should thirst after his blood? The courts were all closed, and law or justice could no man have in all Pomerania. What wonder then if club-law and the right of the strongest should obtain in all places, as in the olden time?"

Hic.—"That law and justice had ceased in the land was, alas! but too true. However, he was not to answer for this, but his princely Grace of Stettin. And because they had ceased in the land, was he, as an upright magistrate, called upon to do his duty yet more sternly, even though the criminal were his own born son. For the Lord, the just Judge, the Almighty and jealous God, called to him daily, from his holy word—'Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, nor be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's.'* Woe to the land's prince who had not

* Dent. i. 17.

considered this, but compelled him, the miserable judge, to steep his father's hands in the blood of his own son. But righteous Abraham conquered through faith, because he was obedient unto God, and bound his own innocent son upon the altar, and drew forth his knife to slay him. Therefore he too would conquer through faith, if he bound his *guilty* son, and drew out the sword against him, obedient to the words of the Lord. Therefore, let him prepare himself for death, and follow the priest into the adjoining little chamber."

When Johann found that his father could in no wise be softened, he began horribly to curse him and the hour of his birth, so that the hair of all who heard him stood on end. And he called the devil to help him, and adjured him to come and carry away this fierce and unnatural father, who was more blood-thirsty than the wild beasts of the forest—for who had ever heard that they murdered their own blood?

"Come, devil," he screamed; "come, devil, and tear this bloodthirsty monster of a father to pieces before my eyes, so will I give myself to thee, body and soul! Hearest thou, Satan! Come and destroy my father, and all who have here come out to murder me, only leave me a little while longer in this life to do thy service, and then I am thine for eternity!"

Now all eyes were turned in fear and horror to the door, but no Satan entered, for the just God would not permit it, else, methinks, he would have run to catch such a morsel for his supper. However, the old man trembled, and seemed dwindling away into nothing before the eyes of the by-standers, as his son uttered the curse. But he soon recovered, and laying his quivering hands upon the head of the imprecator, broke forth into loud weeping, while he prayed thus—

"Oh, thou just and Almighty God, who bringest the devices of the wicked to nought, close thine ears against this horrible curse of my false son, remember thine own word—'Into an evil soul wisdom cannot enter, nor dwell in a body subject unto sin.'* Thou alone canst make the sinful soul

* Wisdom i. 4.

wise and the body of sin a temple of the Holy Ghost. Oh, Lord Jesus Christ, hast thou no drop of living water, no crumb of strengthening manna for this sinful and foolish soul? Hast thou no glance of thy holy eyes for this denying Peter, that he may go forth and weep bitterly? Hast thou no word to strike the heart of this dying thief—of this lost son, who, here bound for death, has cursed his own father, and given himself up, body and soul, to the enemy of mankind? Oh, blessed spirit, who comest and goest as the wind, enter the heavenly temple, which is yet the work of thy hands, and make it, by thy presence, a temple of the Most High! Oh, Lord God, dwell there but one moment, that so in his death-anguish he may feel the sweetness of thy presence, and the heaven-high comfort of thy promise! Oh, thou Holy Trinity, who hast kept my steps from falling, through so much care and trouble, through so much shame and disgrace, through so much watching and tears, and even now through these terrible curses of my son, come and say Amen to this my last blessing, which I, poor father, give him for his curse.

"Yes, Johann, the Lord bless thee and keep thee in the death hour. The Lord shed his grace on thee, and give thee peace in thy last agonies!

"Yes, Johann; the Lord bless thee and keep thee, and give thee peace upon earth, and peace above the earth! Amen, amen, amen!"

When the trembling old man had so prayed, many wept aloud, and his son trembled likewise, and followed the priest, silently and humbly, into the neighbouring chamber.

Then the old man turned to Sidonia, and asked, why she had left her worthy cousin Marcus of Saatzig?

Upon which she told him, weeping, how his son had deceived her, in order to get her once more into his power, in order that he might rob her, and all she wanted now was, to be let go her way in peace to her farm-houses in Zachow.

But this the old man refused.

"No; this must not be yet. She was as evil-minded as his own son, and needed an example to warn her from sin. Not a step should she move till his head was off."

And, for this purpose, he bid two burghers seize hold of her by the hands, and carry her to the scaffold when the execution was going to take place. The grave must be nearly ready now, which he bade them dig in a corner of the church-yard close by, and he had ordered a car-load of sand likewise, to be laid down there, for the execution should take place in the church-yard.

Meanwhile the poor criminal has come out of the inner chamber with M. Vitus, and going up to the bench where the poor father had sunk down exhausted by emotion, he flings himself at his feet, exclaiming, with the prodigal son in the parable—

“Father, I have sinned before heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!”

Then he kissed his feet, and bedewed them with his tears.

Now the father thought this was all pretence as formerly, so he gave no answer. Upon which the poor sinner rose up, and reached his hand to each one in the chamber, praying their forgiveness for all the evil he had done, but which he was now going to expiate in his blood. Item: he advanced to Sidonia, sighing—

“Would not she too forgive him, for the love of God? Woe, alas! She had more to forgive than any one; but would not she give him her pardon, for some comfort on this last journey; and so would he bear her remembrance before the throne of God?”

But Sidonia pushed away his hand.

“He should be ashamed of such old-womanish weakness. Did he not see that his father was only trying to frighten him? For were he in earnest, then were he more cruel even than her own unnatural father, who, though he had only left her two cabins in Zachow, out of all his great riches, yet had left her, at least, her poor life.”

Hereupon the poor sinner made answer—

“Not so; I know my father; he is not cruel, what he does is right; therefore I willingly die, trusting in my blessed Saviour, whose body will sanctify my body in the grave. For, had I committed no other sin, yet the curse I

uttered just now is alone sufficient to make me worthy of death, as it is written—‘He that curseth father or mother shall surely be put to death.’*

When the old man heard such like words, he resolved to put his son’s sincerity to the test, for truly it seemed to him impossible that the Almighty God should so suddenly make the crooked straight, and the dead to live, and a child of heaven out of a child of hell. So he spake—

“Thy repentance seemeth good unto me, my son, what sayest thou? will it last, think you, if I now bestow thy life on thee?”

Hereat Sidonia laughed aloud, exclaiming—

“Said I not right? It was all a jest of thy dear father’s.”

But the poor sinner would not turn again to his wallowing in the mire. He sat down upon a bench, covering his face with his hands, and sobbed aloud. At last he answered—

“Alas, father, life is sweet and death is bitter; but since the Holy Spirit hath entered into me, with the body of our Lord, I say, death is sweet and life is bitter. No; off with my head! ‘I find a law in my members warring against the law of my spirit, and making me a prisoner under the law of sin;’† for if I see my neighbour rich and I am poor, then the demon of covetousness rises in me, and my fingers itch to seize my share. Or, if the foaming flask is before me, how can I resist to drain it, for the spirit of gluttony is within me? Or, if I see a maiden, the blood throbs in my veins, and the demon of lust has taken possession of me. ‘Oh, wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of this death?’ You will, dearest father. You will release me from this life, as you once gave it to me, for it is now a life in death. Ah! shew mercy! Come quickly, and release me from the body of this death!”

When he ceased, the old man sprung up like a youth, and pressing his lost son to his heart, sobbed forth like him of the gospel—

* Exodus xxi. 17. † Romans vii. 23.

"Oh, friends, see! 'This, my son, was dead, but is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' Yea, yea, see all that nothing is impossible with God. Oh, thou Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now, I have nothing more to ask, but that I too may soon be released from the body of this death, and go forth to meet my new-found son amidst the bright circle of the Holy Angels."

Then the son answered—

"Let me go now, father. See, the morning dawn shines already through the window, so hath the loving mercy of my God come to me, who sat in darkness and the shadow of death. Farewell, father; let me go now. Away with this head in the clear early morning light, so that my feet be fixed for evermore upon the path to peace."

And so speaking, he seized M. Vitus by the hand, who was sobbing loudly, as well as most of the burghers, and the executioner with his assistants bearing the coffin were going to follow, when the old man, who had sunk down upon a bench, called back his son, though he had already gone out at the door, and prayed the executioner to let him stay one little while longer. For he remembered that his son had a welt upon his neck, and he must see whether it would interfere with the sword. Woe, woe! if he should have to strike twice or thrice before the head fell!

So the executioner removed the neck-cloth from the poor sinner (who, by the great mercy of God, was stronger than any of them), and having felt the welt, said—

"No; the welt was close up to the head, but he would take the neck in the middle, as indeed was his usual custom. His Worship may make his mind quite easy; he would stake his life on it, that the head would fall with the first blow. This was his one hundred and fiftieth, and he never yet had failed."

Then the unhappy criminal tied his cravat on again, took M. Vitus by the hand, and said—

"Farewell, my father; once more forgive me for all that I have done!"

After which he went out quickly, without waiting to hear a word more from his father, and the executioner followed him.

Meanwhile, the afflicted father was sore troubled in mind. Three times he repeated the text—"Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, nor be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's." Then he called upon God to forgive the prince, who, by taking away law and justice from the land, had obliged him to be the judge and condemner of his son. How the Lord dealt with the prince we shall hear further on. One while he sent mine host to look over the hedge, and tell him if the head were off yet. Then he would begin to pray that he might soon follow this poor son, who had never given him one moment of joy but through his death, and pass quickly after him through the vale of tears.

The son, however, is steadfast unto the end. For when they reached the church-yard, he stood still a while gazing on the heap of sand. Then he desired to be led to the spot where his grave was dug; and near this same grave there being a tombstone, on which was figured a man kneeling before a crucifix, he asked—

"Who was to share his grave-bed here?"

Whereupon M. Vitus replied—

"He was a *rector scholæ* out of Stargard, a very learned man, who had retired from active life, and settled down here at Bruchhausen, where he died not long since."

Whereat the poor sinner stood still a while, and then repeated this beautiful distich, no doubt by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to warn all learned sinners against that demon of pride and vain-glory, which too often takes possession of them.

"Quid juvat innumeros scire atque evolvere casus
Si facienda fugis et fugienda facis?"*

Then he looked calmly at his grave, and only prayed the executioner not to put his head between his feet; after which he returned to the sand-heap, and exclaimed—

"Now to God!"

Upon which, M. Vitus blessed him yet again, and spake—

* "What is the use of knowledge, and all our infinite learning,
If we fly what is right, and do what we ought to fly?"

"Oh, God, Father, who hast brought back this lost son, and filled this foolish soul with wisdom; ah, Jesus, Saviour, who, in truth, hast turned thy holy eyes on him as on the denying Peter, and on the dying thief. Oh, Holy Spirit, who has not scorned to make this poor vessel a temple for thyself to dwell in, that in the death-anguish this sinner may find the sweetness of thy presence, and the heaven-high comfort of thy promises! Oh, thou Holy Trinity—to thee—to thee—to thee—to thy grace, thy power, thy protection, we resign this dying mortal in his last agonies. Help him, Lord God! *Kyrie Eleison!* Give thy Holy Angels command to bear this poor soul into Abraham's bosom. Oh, come, Lord Jesus; help him, oh, Lord our God. *Kyrie Eleison!* Amen."

And hereupon he pronounced a last blessing over him. And when the executioner took off his upper garment, and bound the kerchief over his eyes, M. Vitus again spake—

"Think on the holy martyrs, of whom Basilus Magnus testifies that they exclaimed, when undressing for their death.—*Non vestes exuimus, sed veterem hominem deponimus.*"*

Upon which he answered from under the kerchief something in Latin, but the executioner had laid the cloth so thickly even over his mouth and chin, that no one could catch the words. Then he kneeled down, and while the executioner drew his sword, M. Vitus chaunted—

"When my lips no more can speak,
May thy spirit in me cry,
When my eyes are faint and weak,
May my soul see heaven nigh!

"When my heart is sore dismayed,
This dying frame has lost its strength,
May my spirit, with thy aid,
Cry—Jesu take me home at length!"

And all who stood round saw, as it were, a wonderful sign from God; for, as the executioner let the sword fall, head and sun appeared at the same moment—the head

* "We lay not off our clothes but the old man."—Basil the Great, archbishop of Cesarea, A.D. 379.

upon the earth, the sun above the earth; and there was a deep silence. Sidonia alone laughed out loud, and cried—"So ends the conversion!" And while the psalm was singing—"Now, pray we to the Holy Ghost," the executioner acting as clerk, she disappeared, and for thirty years, as we shall hear presently, no one could ascertain where she went to or how she lived; though sometimes, like a horrible ghost, she was seen occasionally here and there.

Summa.—The miserable criminal was laid in his coffin, and as, in truth, it was too short for the corpse, and the poor sinner had requested that his head might not be placed between his feet, so it was laid upon his chest, with his hands folded over it, and thus he was buried.

The old father rejoiced greatly that his son remained steadfast in the truth until the last, and thanked God for it. Then he returned to Stargard; and I may just mention, to conclude, concerning him, that the merciful God heard the prayer of this his faithful servant, for he scarcely survived his son a year, but, after a short illness, fell asleep in Jesus.*

CHAPTER XIX.

OF SIDONIA'S DISAPPEARANCE FOR THIRTY YEARS.—ITEM: HOW THE YOUNG PRINCESS ELIZABETH MAGDELENE WAS POSSESSED BY A DEVIL, AND OF THE SUDDEN DEATH OF HER FATHER, ERNEST LUDOVICUS OF POMERANIA.

I HAVE said that Sidonia disappeared after the execution at Bruchhausen, and that for thirty years no one knew where she lived or how she lived. At her farm-house at Zachow she never appeared; but the *Acta Criminalia* set forth that during that period she wandered about the towns of Freien-

* For further particulars concerning this truly worthy man, who may well be called the Pomeranian Manlius,—see Friedeborn, *Description of Old Stettin*, vol. ii. p. 113; and Barthold, *Pomeranian History*, pp. 46, 419.

wald, Regenwald, Stargard, and other places, in company with Peter Konnemann, and divers other knaves.

However the ducal prosecutor, although he instituted the strictest inquiries at the period of her trial, could ascertain nothing beyond this, except that in consequence of her evil habits and licentious tongue, she was held everywhere in fear and abhorrence, and was chased away from every place she entered after about six or eight o'clock. Further, that some misfortune always fell upon every one who had dealings with her, particularly young married people. To the said Konnemann, she betrothed herself after the death of her first paramour, but afterwards gave him fifty florins to get rid of the contract, as she confessed at the seventeenth question upon the rack, according to the *Actis Lothmanni*. Meantime her brothers and cousins were so completely turned against her, that her brother even took those two farm-houses to himself; and though Sidonia wrote to him, begging that an annuity might be settled on her, yet she never received a line in answer—and this was the manner in which the whole cousinhood treated her in her despair and poverty.

I myself made many inquiries as to her mode of life during those thirty years, but in vain. Some said that she went into Poland and there kept a little tavern for twenty years, some had seen her living at Rügen at the old wall, where in heathen times the goddess Hertha was honoured. Some said she went to Rügen, a little uninhabited island between Rügen and Usdom, where the wild geese and other birds flock in the moulting season and drop their feathers. Thence, they said, she gathered the eggs, and killed the birds with clubs. At least this was the story of the Usdom fishermen, but whether it were Sidonia or some other outcast woman, I cannot in strict verity declare. Only in Freienwald did I hear for certain, that she lived there twelve years with some carl whom she called her shield-knight; but one day they quarrelled, and beat each other till the blood flowed, after which they both ran out of the town, and went different ways.

Summa.—On the 1st of May, 1592, when the witches gather in the bracken to hold their Walpurgis night, and the princely castle of Wolgast was well guarded from the

evil one by white and black crosses placed on every door, an old wrinkled hag was seen about eight o'clock of the morning (just the time she had returned from the Blocksberg, according to my thinking), walking slowly up and down the great corridor of the princely castle. And the providence of the great God so willed it, that at that moment the young and beautiful Princess Elizabeth Magdalena (who had been betrothed to the Duke Frederick of Courland), opened her chamber-door, and slipped forth to pay her morning greetings to her illustrious father, Duke Ernest and his spouse, the Lady Sophia Hedwig of Brunswick, who sat together drinking their warm beer,* and had sent for her.

So the hag advanced with much friendliness, and cried out, "Hey, what a beautiful young damsel! But her lord papa was called 'the handsome' in his time, and wasn't she as like him as one egg to another. Might she take her ladyship's little hand, and kiss it?" Now as the hag was bold in her bearing, and the young Princess was a timid thing, she feared to refuse; so she reached forth her hand, alas! to the witch, who first three times blew on it, murmuring some words before she kissed it, then as the young Princess asked her who she was and what she wanted, the evil hag answered: "I would speak with your gracious father, for I have known him well. Ask his Princely Grace to come to me, for I have somewhat to say to him." Now the Princess, in her simplicity, omitted to ask the hag's name, whereby much evil came to pass, for had she told her gracious father that SIDONIA wished to speak to him, assuredly he never would have come forth, and that fatal and malignant glance of the witch would not have fallen upon him.

However, his Serene Grace, having a mild Christian nature, stepped out into the corridor at the request of his dear daughter, and asked the hag who she was, and what she wanted. Upon this, she fixed her eyes on him in silence for a long while, so that he shuddered, and his blood seemed

* Before the introduction of coffee or chocolate, warm beer was in general use at breakfast.

to turn to ice in his veins.* At last she spake: "It is a strange thing, truly, that your Grace should no longer remember the maiden to whom you once promised marriage." At this his Grace recoiled in horror, and exclaimed: "Ha, Sidonia! but how you are changed." "Ahl!" she answered with a scornful laugh, "you may well triumph, now that my cheek is hollow, and my beauty gone, and that I have come to you for justice against my own brother in Stramehl, who denies me even the means of subsistence—you, who brought me to this pass."

Upon which his Grace answered, that her brother was a subject of the Duke of Stettin. Let her go then to Stettin, and demand justice there.

Illa.—"She had been there, but the Duke refused to see her, and to her request for a *præbenda* in the court of Marienfliess had returned no answer. She prayed his Grace, therefore, out of old good friendship, to take up her cause, and use his influence with the Lord Duke of Stettin, to obtain the *præbenda* for her, also to send a good scolding to her brother at Stramehl under his own hand."

Now my gracious Prince was so anxious to get rid of her, that he promised everything she asked. Whereupon she would kiss his hand, but he drew it back shuddering, upon which she went down the great castle steps again, murmuring to herself.

But her wickedness soon came to light; for mark:—scarcely a few days had passed over, when the beautiful young Princess was possessed by Satan; she rolls herself upon the ground, twists and writhes her hands and feet, speaks with a great coarse voice like a common carl, blasphemes God and her parents; and what was more wonderful than all, her throat swelled, and when they laid their hand on it, something living seemed creeping up and down in it. Then it went up to her mouth, and her tongue swelled so, that her eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and the gracious young lady became fearful to look at.

* This belief in the witchcraft of a glance, was very general during the witch period. And even the ancients notice it (Pliny, Hist. vii. 2), also Aul. Gell. Noct. Attic. ix. 4; and Virgil Eclog. lii. The glance of a woman with double pupils was particularly feared

Item.—Then she began to speak Latin, though she had never learned this tongue, whereupon many, and in particular Mag. Michael Aspius, the court chaplain (for Dr. Gerschovius was long since dead) pronounced that Satan himself verily must be in the maiden.* This was fully proved on

* The ancients name three distinguishing marks of demoniacal possession:—

1st, When the patient blasphemes God, and cannot repeat the leading articles of his Christian belief.

2d, When he foretells events which afterwards come to pass.

3d, When he speaks in a strange tongue, which it can be proved he never learned.

Now the somnambulists of our day fulfil the second and third conditions without dispute; and some account for the divining power, by saying, it is the effect of the increased activity of the soul. They also assert that the patient speaks in a strange tongue only when the magnetiser with whom he is in *en rapport*, understands the tongue himself, and the patient speaks it because all the thoughts, feelings, words, &c. of the operator become his—in short, their souls become one. This explanation, however, is very improbable, and has not been confirmed by facts; for the phenomenon of speaking in a strange tongue often appears before a perfect *rapport* has been obtained between the patient and the operator. Indeed, Psellus gives an instance to show that it is not even at all necessary. (Psellus lived about the eleventh century, and wrote *De Operatione Dæmonum*, also *De Mysteriis Ægyptiorum*, his works are very remarkable and well worth a perusal.) He states, that a sick woman all at once began to speak in a strange and barbarous tongue no one had ever heard before. At last some of the women about her brought an Armenian magician to see her, who instantly found that she spoke Armenian, though she had never in her life beheld one of that nation. Psellus describes him as an old lean wrinkled man. He acted quite differently from our modern magnetisers, for he never sought to place himself in sympathetic relation with her by passes or touches; on the contrary, he drew his sword, and placing himself beside the bed, began uttering the most harsh and cruel words he could think of in the Armenian tongue (*acriter conviciatus est*). The woman retorted in the Armenian tongue likewise, and tried to get out of bed to fight with him. Then the barbarian grew as if mad, and endeavoured to stab her, upon which she shrunk back terrified and trembling, and soon fell into a deep sleep. Psellus seems to have witnessed this, for he says the woman was wife to his eldest brother. As further regards demoniacal possession, the New Testament is full of examples thereof; and though in the last century, the reality of the fact was assailed, yet Franz Meyer has again defended it with arguments that cannot be overthrown. Remarkable examples of possession in modern times we find in the *Didiskalia*, No. 81, of the year 1833; and in Berner's *History of Satanic Possession*, page 20.

the following Sunday; for during divine service in the church of Saint Peter, the young Princess was carried in on a litter and laid down before the altar, whereupon she commenced uttering horrible blasphemies, and mocking the holy prayer in a coarse bass voice, while she foamed and raged so violently, that eight men could scarcely hold her in her bed. Whereat the whole Christian congregation were admonished to pray to the Lord for this poor maiden, that she might be freed from the devil within her; and during the week, all priests throughout the land were commanded to offer up prayers day and night for her princely Grace. But on Sundays, all the people were to unite in one common supplication to the throne of grace, for the like object.

And it seemed, after some weeks, as if God had heard their prayers, and commanded Satan to leave the body of the young maiden, for she had now rest for fourteen days, and was able to pray again. Also her rosy cheeks began to bloom once more, so that her parents were filled with joy, and resolved to hold a thank festival throughout the land, and receive the holy sacrament in St. Peter's church with their beloved daughter.

But what happened? For as the godly discourse had ended, and their Graces stepped to the altar to make a rich offering on the plate which lay upon the little desk, free of approach from all sides, my knave Satan has again begun his work. Truly, he waited with cunning till her Grace had swallowed the sacrament, that his blasphemies might seem more horrible. And this was the way he manifested himself.

After the court marshal and the castellan had laid down a black velvet carpet, embroidered in gold with the Pomeranian and Brandenburg arms, for their Graces to kneel upon, they took another black velvet cloth, on which the holy supper was represented embroidered in silver, to hold before their Graces like a serviette, while they received the blessed elements. Then advanced the priest with the sacrament, but scarcely had the gracious young Princess swallowed the same, when she uttered a loud cry and fell backwards with her head upon the ground, while Satan

raged so in her that it might have melted the heart of a stone.

So M. Aspius bade the organ cease, and then placed the young lady upon a seat, after which he called upon their Graces, and the whole congregation, to join him in offering up a prayer. Then he solemnly adjured the evil spirit to come out of her: it, however, had grown so daring, that it only laughed at the priest; and when asked where it had been for so long, and in particular where it had lain while the Jesu bride was wedded to her Holy Saviour in the blessed sacrament, it impatiently answered, that it had lain under her tongue; many knaves might lie under a bridge while an honourable seigneur passed overhead, and why should not it do the like? And here, to the unspeakable horror of the whole congregation, it seemed to move up and down in the chest and throat of the young Princess, like some animal.

But the long-suffering of God was now at an end, for while the Reverend Dr. Aspius was talking himself weary with adjurations, and gaining no good by it, for the evil spirit only mocked and jeered him, crying, "Look at the fat parson how he sweats, maybe it will help as much as his chattering over the wine," and who should enter the church (sent no doubt by the all-merciful God), but the Reverend Dr. Joel, Professor at Grypswald, for he had heard how this lusty Satan had taken possession of the princely maiden. When the devil saw him, he began to tremble through all the limbs of the young Princess, and exclaimed in Latin: "*Consummatum est*,"* For this Dr. Joel was a powerful man, and learned in all the cunning shifts of the arch-enemy, having many times disputed *de Magis*.†

Now when he advanced to the young Princess, and saw how the evil spirit ran up and down her poor form, like a mouse in a net, he was filled with horror, and removing his hat, exclaimed, without taking much heed of his Latin: "*Deus misereatur peccatoris*." Upon which the devil, in a deep bass voice, corrected him, crying, "*Dic peccatrici, dic peccatrici*,"‡

* It is over. † Of Witchcraft, see Barthold iv. 2, 412.

‡ *Peccatoris* is masculine, *Peccatrici* feminine.

However, Satan himself felt that his hour had come; for when Doctor Joel laid his hand upon the maiden, and repeated a powerful adjuration from the *Clavicula Salomonis*, Satan immediately promised to obey, if he were allowed to take away the oblation-cloth which lay upon the desk.

Ille.—“What did he want with the oblation-cloth?”

Satanas.—“There was a coin in it which vexed him.”

Ille.—“What coin could it be? and wherefore did it vex him?”

Satanas.—“He would not say.”

Ille.—(Adjures him again.)

Satanas.—“Let him have it, or he would tear the young maiden to pieces.” And here he began to foam and rage so horribly, that her eyes turned in her head, and she gnashed with her teeth, so that father and mother had to cover their eyes not to see her great agony. Whereupon Doctor Joel bent down and wrote with his finger upon her breast the Tetragrammaton,* crying out:—

“Away, thou unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost!”

Upon which the young maiden sank down as quiet as a corpse, and the oblation-cloth, which lay upon the desk, whirled round of itself in the middle of the church with great noise and clatter, as if seized by a storm-wind, and the money therein was all scattered about the church, so that the old wives who sat upon the benches fell down upon the floor, right and left, to try and catch it.

Great horror and amazement now filled the whole congregation; yet as some had expressed an opinion that the young Princess was only afflicted by a sickness, and not possessed at all, Doctor Joel thought it needful to admonish them in the following words:—

“Those wise persons who, forsooth, would not credit such a thing as Satanic possession, might see now of a truth, by the oblation-cloth, that Satan bodily had been amongst them. He knew there were many such wise knaves

* The four letters which compose the name Jehovah (יהוה). It was employed by the Theurgists in all their most powerful conjurations.

in the church; therefore let them hold their tongue for evermore, and remember that such signs had been permitted before of God, to testify of the real bodily presence of the devil. Example (Matt. viii.): where, on the command of Christ, a legion of devils went into the swine of the Gergasenes; so that these animals, contrary to their nature, ran down into the sea and were drowned. But the wise people of this day little heed these divine signs; so he will add two from historical records which he happened to remember."

"First, the Jew, Josephus, relates, that in presence of the world-renowned Roman captain, Vespasian, of his son Titus, also, of all the officers and troops of the army, an acquaintance of his, by name Eleazer, adjured the devil out of one possessed, by means of the ring of Solomon, repeating at the same time the powerful spell which, no doubt, the great king himself employed to control the demons, and which, probably, was the very one he had just now exorcised the devil with, out of the *Clavicula Salomonis*. And to show the by-standers that it was indeed a devil which he had exorcised out of the nose of the patient, the said Eleazer bid him, as he was passing, to overturn a vessel of water that lay there, which indeed was done, to the great wonderment of all present. Thus even the blind heathen were convinced, though they would-be wise of the present day ignorantly doubted."

"But people might say this happened in old times, and was only told by a stupid Jew; therefore he would give a modern example.

"There was a woman named Kronisha (she was still well remembered by the old people of Stralsund), who was sorely given to pomp and vanity, wherefore a devil was sent into her to punish her; and after the preacher at St. Nicholas had exorcised him to the best of his power, the wicked spirit said, mockingly, that he would go if they gave him a pane of glass out of the window over the tower-door; and this being granted, one of the panes was instantly scattered with a loud clang, and the devil flew away through the opening.*

* See Sasstrowen, his family, birth, and adventures. Edited by Mohnike, part i. 73.

"So the Christian congregation might now see what silly fools these wise people were who presumed to doubt," &c. Then Doctor Joel admonished the Prince himself to keep a diligent eye over this Satan, who, day by day, was growing more impudent in the land—no doubt because the pure doctrine of Dr. Luther vexed him sorely.

And indeed his Highness, to show his gratitude for the recovery of his dear daughter, did not cease in his endeavours to banish witches from the land, knowing that Sidonia had brought all the evil upon the young Princess. Fifteen were seized and burned at this time, to the great joy of the country; but, alas! these truly princely and Christian measures little helped among the godless race, for evil seemed still to strengthen in the land, and many wonderful signs appeared, one of which I would not set down here, as it was only seen by the court-fool, but that events confirmed it.

I mean that strange thing, along with a three-legged hare, which appeared eighty years before, at the death of Duke Bogislaus the Great, and since, at the death of each Duke of his house. By a strange whim of Satan's, this apparition was only visible to fools; until indeed (as we shall hear anon) it appeared to the nuns at Marienfliess, who bore witness of it.

Summa.—On the very day wherein the devil's brides were burned at Wolgast, the fool was walking at evening time up and down the great corridor, when a little manikin, hardly three hands high, started out from behind a beer-barrel, riding on a three-legged hare. He was dressed all in black, except little red boots which he had on, and he rides up and down the corridor—hop! hop! hop!—stares at my fool and makes a face at him; then rides off again—hop! hop! hop!—till he vanished behind the barrel.

No one would believe the fool's story; but woe, alas! it soon became clear what the little manikin Puck denoted. For my gracious Prince, who had grown quite weak ever since this horrible witch-work, which had been raging for some weeks—so that Pomerania never had seen the like—became daily worse, and not even the fine Falernian wine from Italy, which used to cure him, helped him now. So

he died on the 17th July, 1591, aged forty-six years, seven months, and fifteen days, leaving his only son, Philippus Julius, a child of eight years old, to reign in his place. Whereupon the deeply afflicted widow placed the boy under the tutelage and guardianship of his uncle, the princely Lord of Stettin; but, woe! woe! the guardian must soon follow his dear brother! and all through the evil wickedness of Sidonia, as we shall hear in the following chapters.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW SIDONIA DEMEANS HERSELF AT THE CONVENT OF MARIENFLIESS—ITEM, HOW THEIR PRINCELY AND ELECTORAL GRACES OF POMERANIA, BRANDENBURG, AND MECKLENBURG, WENT ON SLEIGHS TO WOLGAST, AND OF THE DIVERS PASTIMES OF THE JOURNEY.

AFTER this, Sidonia disappeared again for a couple of years, and no man knew whither she had flown, or what she did, until one morning she appeared at the convent of Marienfließ, driving a little one-horse wagon herself, and dressed no better than a fish-wife. On driving into the court, she desired to speak with the abbess, Magdalena von Petersdorf; and when she came, Sidonia ordered the cell of the deceased nun, Barbara Kleist, to be got ready for her reception, as his Highness of Stettin had presented her to a *præbenda* here.

So the pious old abbess believed the story, and forthwith conducted her to the cell, No. 11; but Sidonia spat out at it, said it was a pig-sty, and began to run clattering through all the cells till she reached the refectory, a large chamber where the nuns assembled for evening prayer. This, she said, was the only spot fit for her to put her nose in, and she would keep it for herself. Meanwhile, the whole sisterhood ran together to the refectory to see Sidonia; and as most of them were girls under twenty, they tittered and laughed, as young women-folk will do when they behold a hag. This angered her.

"Ha!" she exclaimed, "the flesh and the devil have not been destroyed in them yet, but I will soon give them something else to think of than their lovers."

And here, as one of them laughed louder than the rest, Sidonia gave her a blow on the mouth.

"Let that teach the peasant girl more respect for a castle and land-dowered maiden."

When the good abbess saw and heard all this, she nearly fainted with shame, and had to hold by a stool, or she would have fallen to the ground. However she gained fresh courage when, upon asking for Sidonia's documents, she found that there were none to show. Without more ado, therefore, she bade her leave the convent; and, amidst the jeers and laughter of all the sisterhood, Sidonia was obliged to mount her one-horse cart again, or the convent porter had orders to force her out.

By this, all may perceive that, in place of repenting, Sidonia had fallen still further in the mire, wherein she wallowed yet for many years, as if it were, indeed, her true and natural element, like that beetle, of which Albertus Magnus speaks, that died if one covered it with rose-leaves, but came to life again when laid in dung.

Hardly has she left the convent-gate when the old abbess bade a carl get ready a carriage, and flew in it to Stettin herself, to lay the whole case before my gracious Prince, and entreat him, even on her knees, not to send such a notorious creature amongst them; for what blessing could the convent hope to obtain if they harboured such an infamous sinner? So his Grace wonders much over the daring of the harlot; for he had given her no *præbenda*, though she was writing to him constantly requesting one. Nor would he ever think of giving her one; for why should he send such a hell-besom to sweep the pious convent of Marienfließ? The good abbess might rise up, for as long as he lived, Sidonia should never enter the convent.

And his Grace held by his word, though it cost him his life, as I shall just now relate with bitter sighs.

It happened that, A.D. 1600, there was a terribly hard winter, so that the fresh Haff* was quite frozen over, and able to bear heavy beams. Now, as the ice was smooth, and beautiful as a mirror, my lord of Stettin proposed to

* The river Haff.

his guests—Joachim Friedrich, elector of Brandenburg, his brother-in-law, and old Duke Ulrich of Mecklenburg, his uncle, to go over the Haff in sleighs, and pay a visit to the princely widow and her little son.

Their Graces were well pleased at the idea. Whereupon his Highness of Stettin gave orders to have such a procession formed as never had been seen in Pomerania before, for magnificence and beauty, and therefore I shall note down some particulars here.

There were a hundred sleighs, some drawn by reindeer caparisoned like horses, and all decorated gaily. The three ducal sleighs in particular were entirely girded and lined with sable skin; each was drawn by four Andalusian horses; and my Lady Erdmuth, who was a great lover of show and pomp, had hers hung with little tinkling bells and chains of gold, so that no one to look at them could imagine how very little of the dear gold her gracious lord and husband had in his purse, by reason of the hardness of the times.

The adornments of the other sleighs were less costly. Upon them came the ministers, the officials, and others pertaining to the retinue of the three princes: item, the ladies-in-waiting, and divers of the reverend clergy; last of all came the Duke's henchman, with a pack of wolf-dogs in leash: item, several live hares and foxes; a live bear, which they purposed to let slip, for the pleasure and pastime of their Graces. But the young men out of the town, fifty head strong, and many of the knights, ran along on skates, headed by Dinnies Kleist, that mighty man, who bore in one hand the blood-banner of Pomerania, and in the other, that of Brandenburg. Barthold von Ramin ran by his side, with the Mecklenburg standard. He was a strong knight too. But ah! my God! how my Ramin, with his ox-head, was distanced by the wild men of Pomerania, as they ran upon the ice over the Haff!* Two

* The blood-standard was granted by the Emperor Maximilian II., to Duke Johann Friedrich of Pomerania, because he carried the imperial banner during the Turkish war of 1566. It only differed from the old banner by having a red ground—from thence its name. Both Pomerania and Brandenburg had wild men in their escutcheon, while Mecklenburg bore an ox's head.

reserve sleighs, drawn by six Frisian horses, finished the procession; they were laden with axes, planks, ropes, and dry garments, both for men and women.

When their Graces mounted the sleighs amidst the ringing of bells and roaring of cannon, great was their astonishment to see their own initials stamped into the hard ice by Dinnies Kleist, as thus: F. U. J. E. J. F., which, however, afterwards caused much dismay to the honest burghers, for one of them—M. Faber, a *præceptor*—mistaking the J. for a G. read plainly upon the ice: “Fuge, J. F.”—that is, “Fly, Johann Frederick!”

Ah! truly has the gracious Prince flown from thence; but it is to a bitter death.

During the journey, Duke Johann had much jesting with his brother-in-law, the elector, who was filled with wonder at the strength of Dinnies Kleist, for he kept a-head even of the Andalusian stallions, and waved aloft the two banners of Pomerania and Brandenburg, while his long hair floated behind him; and sometimes he stopped, kissed the banners, and then inclined them to their Serene Princely Graces. Whereupon Duke Johann exclaimed: “Ay, brother, you might well give me a thousand of your wide-mouthed Berliners for this carl; though, methinks, if he had his will, he would make their wide mouths still wider.” At this, his Electoral Grace looked rather vexed, and began to uphold the men of Cologne. Upon which his Highness cut him short, saying, “Marry, brother, you know the old proverb:—

“The men of Cologne
Have no hues of their own,
But the men of Stettin
Are the true ever-green.”

For where truly could your fellows find the true green in their sandy dust-box? Marry, cousin, one Pomerania is worth ten Margravates; and I will show your Grace just now that my land in winter is more productive than yours even in autumn.”

His Grace here alluded to the fisheries; for along the way, for twelve or fourteen miles, the fishermen had been ordered to set their nets by torch-light the night before, in

holes dug through the ice, so that on the arrival of the princely party the nets might be drawn up, and the draught exhibited to their Graces.

Now, when they entered the fresh Haff, which lay before them like a large mirror, six miles long and four broad, His Grace of Pomerania called out—

“See here, brother, this is my first store-room; let us try what it will give us to eat.”

Upon which he signed to Dinnies Kleist to steer over to the first heap of nets, which lay like a black wood in the distance. These belonged to the Ziegenort fishermen, as the old schoolmaster, Peter Leisticow himself told me; and as they had taken a great draught the day before, many people from the towns of Warp, Stepenitz, and Uckermund were assembled there to buy up the fish, and then retail it, as was their custom, throughout the country. They had made a fire upon a large sheet of iron laid upon the ice, while their horses were feeding close by upon hay, which they shook out before them. And, having taken a merry carouse together, they all set to dancing upon the ice with the women to the bagpipe, so that the encampment looked right jovial as their Graces arrived.

Now when the grand train came up, the peasants roared out—

“Donnerwetter,* look at the plötz-eaters! See the cursed plötz-eaters! Donnerwetter, what plötz-eaters! †”

And now they observed, during their shouting, that the water had risen up to their knees; and when the ducal procession rushed up, the abyss re-echoed with a noise like thunder, so that the foreign princes were alarmed, but soon grew accustomed thereto. Then the pressure of such a crowd upon the ice caused the water to spout out of the holes, to the height of a man. So that by the time they were two

* A common oath.

† Plötz-eaters was a nick-name given by the Pomeranians to the people of the Margravates. For the plötz (*Cyprinus Erythrophthalmus*) is a very poor tasteless fish, while the rivers of Pomerania are stocked with the very finest of all kinds. In return, the men of the Marks called the Pomeranians “Feather-heads,” from the quantity of moor-palms (*Eriophorum vaginatum*) which grow in their numerous rich meadows.

bow-shots from the nets, all the folk, the women and children especially, were running, screaming, in every direction, trying to save themselves on the firm ice, to the great amusement of their Graces, while a peasant cried out to the sleigh-drivers—

“Stop, stop! or ye’ll go into the cellar!”

Hereupon his Grace of Pomerania beckoned over the Ziegenort schoolmaster, and asked him what they had taken, to which he answered—

“Gracious Prince, we have taken bley; the nets are all loaded, we’ve taken seventy schümers,* and your Grace ought to take one with you for supper.”

Now his Highness the Elector wished to see the nets emptied, so they rested a space while the peasants shovelled out the fish, and pitched them into the aforesaid schümers. But, ah! woe to the fish-thieves who had come over from Warp and other places; for the water having risen up and become all muddy with fish slime, they never saw the great holes, and tumbled in, to the great amusement of the peasants and pastime of their Graces.

How their Highnesses laughed when the poor carls in the water tried to get hold of a net or a rope, or a firm piece of ice, while they floundered about in the water, and the peasants fished them up with their long hooks, at the same time giving many of them a sharp prod on the shoulder, crying out—

“Ha! will ye steal again? Take that for your pains, you robbers!”

Now when their Graces were tired laughing, and looking at the fish hauled, they prepared to depart, but the schoolmaster prayed his Highness of Stettin yet again to take a schümer of fish for their supper, as their Graces were going to stop for the night in Uckermund.

“But what could I do with all the fish?” quoth the Duke.

To which the carl answered in his jargon—

“Eh! gracious master, give them to the plötz-eaters; that will be something new for them; never fear but they’ll eat them all up!”

* A schümer was a measure which contained twelve bushels.

Hereupon his Highness the Elector grew nettled, and cried out—

“Ho! thou damned peasant, thinkest thou we have no bley?”

“Well, ye’ve none here,” replied the man cunningly.

So their Graces laughed, and ordered a couple of bushels of the largest to be placed upon the safety sleigh.

Now when they had gone a little farther and found the ice as smooth as glass, the henchman let loose the bear and the wolf-dogs after it. My stout Bruin first growls and paws the ice, then sets himself in earnest for the race, and, on account of his sharp claws, ran on straight for Uckermund without ever slipping, while the hounds fell down on all sides, or tumbled on their backs, howling with rage and disappointment.

Yet more pleasant was the hare-hunt, for hounds and hares both tumbled down together, and the hares squeaked and the hounds yelped; some hares indeed were killed, but only after infinite trouble, while others ran away after the bear.

After the hunt they came to another fishery, and so on till they reached Uckermund, passing six fisheries in succession, whereof each draught was as large as the first, so that his Grace the Elector marvelled much at the abundance, and seeing the nets full of zannats, at the last halting-place, cried out—

“Marry, brother, your store-room is well-furnished. I might grow dainty here myself. Let us take a bushel of these along with us for supper, for zannat is the fish for me!”

This greatly rejoiced his Grace of Stettin, who ordered the fish to be laid on the sumpter sleigh, and in good time they reached the ducal house at Uckermund, Dinnies Kleist still keeping foremost, and waving his two banners over his head, while Barthold Barnim and the other skaters, hung weary and tired upon the backs of the sleighs.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW SIDONIA MEETS THEIR GRACES UPON THE ICE.—ITEM, HOW
DINNIES KLEIST BEHEADS HIMSELF, AND MY GRACIOUS LORD
OF WOLGAST PERISHES MISERABLY.

THE next morning early the whole train set off from Ucker-mund in the highest spirits, passing net after net, till the Duke of Mecklenburg, as well as the Elector, lifted their hands in astonishment. From the Haff they entered the Pene, and from that the Achterwasser.* Here a great crowd of people stood upon the ice, for the town of Quilitz lay quite near; besides, more fish had been taken here than had yet been seen upon the journey, so that people from Wolgast, Usdom, Lassahn, and all the neighbouring towns had run together to bid for it. But what happened?

Alas, that his Grace should have desired to halt, for scarcely had his sleigh stopped, when a little old woman, meanly clad, with fisher's boots, and a net filled with bley fish in her hand, stepped up to it, and said—

“My good Lord, I am Sidonia von Bork; wherefore have you not replied to my demand for the *præbenda* of Barbara von Kleist in Marienfliess?”

“How could he answer her? He knew nothing at all of her mode of living, or where she dwelt.”

Illa.—“She had bid him lay the answer upon the altar of St. Jacob's in Stettin. Why had he not done so?”

“That was no place for such letters, only for the words of the Holy Spirit and the blessed sacrament of his Saviour, therefore, let her say now where she dwelt.”

Illa.—“The richest maiden in Pomerania could ill say where the poorest now dwelt,” weeping.

“The richest maiden had only herself to blame if she were now the poorest; better had she wept before. The *præbenda* she could never have, let her cease to think of it; but here was an alms, and she might now go her ways.”

* A large bay formed by the Pene.

Illa.—(Refuses to take it, and murmurs.) “Your Grace will soon have bitter sorrow for this.”

As she so menaced and spat out three times, the thing angered Dinnies Kleist (who held her in abhorrence ever since the adventure in the Uckermund forest), and as he had lost none of his early strength, he hit her a blow with the blood standard over the shoulder, exclaiming: “Pack off to the devil, thou shameless hag! What does the witch mean by her spittings? The *præbenda* of my sister Barbara shalt thou never have!”

However, the hag stirred not from the spot, answered no word, but spat out again; and as the illustrious party drove off, she still stood there, and spat out after them.

What this devil’s sorcery denoted we shall soon see; for as they approached Ziemitze, and the ducal house of Wolgast appeared in sight, Dinnies Kleist started on before the safety sleigh; and as soon as the high towers of the castle rose above the trees, he waved the two banners above his head, and brought them together till they kissed. Having held them for a space, he set forward again with giant so strides, in order to be the first to arrive—although, indeed, the town was aware of the advance of the princely train, for the bells were ringing, and the blood-standard waved from St. Peter’s and the three other towers.

But woe, alas! Dinnies, in his impatience, never observed a windwake direct in his path, and down he sank, while the sharp ice cut his head clean off, as if an executioner had done it; and the head, with the long hair, rolled hither and thither, while the body remained fast in the hole, only one arm stuck up above the ice—it was that which held the Brandenburg standard, but the blood-banner of Pomerania had sunk for ever in the abyss.*

When his Grace of Stettin beheld this, he was filled with more sorrow than even at the death of his fool; and, weeping bitterly, commanded seven sleighs to return and seize the evil hag; then with all speed, and for a terrible example, to burn her upon the Quilitz mountain.

* A windwake is a hole formed by the wind in the thawing season, and which afterwards becomes covered with a thin coating of ice by a subsequent frost.

But when many present assured his Grace that such like accidents were very common, and many skaters had perished thus, whereof even Duke Ulrich named several instances, so that his Grace of Stettin need not impute such natural accidents to witchcraft or the power of the hag, he was somewhat calmed. Still he commanded the seven sleighs to return and bring the witch bound to Wolgast, that he might question her as to wherefore she had spat out.

So the sleighs returned, but the vile sorceress was no longer on the ice, neither did any one know whither she had gone; whereupon the sleighs hastened back again after the others.

Now it was the Friday before Shrove Tuesday, about mid-day, when the princely party arrived at Wolgast; and Prince Bogislaff of Barth was there to receive them with his five sons—namely, Philip, Franz, George, Ulrich, and Bogislaff.* And there was a great uproar in the castle—some of the young lords playing ball in the castle court with the young Prince, Philip Julius, others preparing for the carnival mummeries, which were to commence next evening by a great banquet and dance in the hall. Indeed, that same evening, their Graces had a brave carouse, to try and make Duke Johann forget his grief about his well-beloved Dinnies Kleist; and his Grace thus began to discourse concerning him:—

“Truly, brothers, who knows what the devil may have in store for us? for it was a strange thing how my blood-standard sunk in the abyss, while that of my brother of Brandenburg floated above it. Think you that our male line will become extinct, and the heritage of fair Pomerania descend to Brandenburg? For, in truth, it is strange that, out of five brothers, two of us only have heirs—Bogislaff, and Ernest Ludovicus, who has left indeed but one only son.”

Then Duke Bogislaff (whom our Lord God had surely blessed for his humility in resigning the government, and also because of his dutiful conduct ever towards his mother,

* Marginal note of Duke Bogislaff XIV.—This is not true; for I had a fever at the time, and remained at home.

even in his youth having brought her a tame sea-gull) made answer, laughingly: "Dear brother, I think Herr Bacchus has done more to turn Frau Venus against our race than Sidoula or any of her spells, therefore ye need not wonder if ye have no heirs; however, if my five young Princes listen to my warnings, and shun the wine-cup, trust me the blood-standard will be lifted up again, and our ancient name never want a fitting representative."

Meanwhile, as they so discoursed, and the gracious ladies looked down for shame upon the ground, young Lord Philip began a Latin argument with the Rev. Dr. Glambecken, court chaplain at Wolgast, *de monetis*; and pulled out of his pocket a large bag of old coins, which had been presented to him by Doctor Chytræus, professor of theology at Rostock, with whom his Grace interchanged Latin epistles.*

This gave the conversation a new turn, and the ladies particularly were much pleased examining the coins; but the devil himself surely must have anagrammatised one of them, for over the letters, Pomerania, figures were scratched

3 5 6 4 1 2 7 8 0

thus—Pomerania—giving the terrible meaning, *rape omnia* (rob all); and many said that this must have been the very coin which the devil took that time he rent the oblation-table, at the exorcism of the young Princess.

This discovery filled the Pomeranian Duke with strong apprehensions, and young Prince Franz handed over the coin to the Elector of Brandenburg, saying bitterly: "Yes, rob all! Doctor Joel of Grypswald has long since told me that it would all end this way—even as Satan himself has scratched down here—but my Lord father will not credit him, he is so proud of his five sons. Doctor Joel, however, is a right learned man, and no one knows the mysteries of the black art better; besides, who reads the stars more diligently each night than he?"

And, behold, while he is speaking, the fool runs into the hall, pale, and trembling in every limb.

* See the Latin letters of the talented young Prince, in Oelrich's "Contributions to the Literary History of the Pomeranian Dukes," vol. I. p. 67." He fell a victim to intemperance, though his death was imputed likewise to Sidonia, and formed the subject of the sixth torture examination.

"Alas! Lord Franz," he exclaimed, "I have seen the manikin again on his three-legged hare, which appeared at the death of Duke Ernest Ludovicus."

But the young lord boxed him, crying, — "Away, thou knave! must thy chatter help to make us more melancholy?"

However Duke Bogislaff bid the fool stay, and tell them when and where he had seen the imp.

My fool wiped his eyes, and began: "The young Lord Franz had bid him put on his best jacket (that which had been given him as a Christmas-box) for the carnival mum-mings on Shrove Tuesday; so he went up to the garret to get it himself out of the trunk, but, before he had quite reached the trunk, the black dwarf, with his little red boots, rode out from behind it on his three-legged hare—hop! hop! hop!—made a frightful face at him, and after a little while rode back again—hop! hop! hop! behind his old boots, which stood in a corner, and disappeared!"

What the malicious Puck denoted we shall soon see.— Oh, woe! woe!

Next day all sorts of amusements were set on foot, to chase away gloomy thoughts out of the hearts of the illustrious guests—such as tilting with lances, dancing upon stilts, wrestling, rope-dancing; item, pickleherring, and harlequins. Amongst these last the fool showed off to great advantage, for who could twist his face into more laughable grimaces? Item, in the evening there was a mask of mummers, in which one fellow played the angel, and another dressed as Satan, with a large horse's foot and cock's plume, spat red fire from his mouth, and roared horribly when the angel overcame him (but withal, I think the gloomy thoughts stayed there yet).

And mark what in truth soon happened! When the drums and trumpets struck up the last mask dance in the great Ritter Hall, which every one joins in, old and young, his Grace, Duke Johann, went to the room of his dear cousin Hedwig, the princely widow, and prayed her to tread the dance with him; but she refuses, and sits by the fire and weeps.

"Let not my dear cousin fret," said the Duke, "about the chatter of the fool."

To which she replied, "Alas! wherefore not? For surely it betokens death to my darling little son, Philip Julius."

"No," exclaimed the Duke, quickly, "it betokens mine!" and he fell flat upon the ground.

One can easily imagine how the gracious Lady screamed, so that all ran in from the Knights' Hall in their masks and mumming-dresses, to see indeed the mumming of the true bodily Satan; and Doctor Pomius, who was at the mask likewise, ran in with a smelling-bottle, but all was in vain. His Grace lingered for three days, and then having received the holy sacrament from Doctor Glambecken, died in the same chamber in which he was born, having lived fifty-seven years, five months, twelve days, and fourteen hours.

How can I describe the lamentations of the princely company—yea, indeed, of the whole town?—for every one saw now plainly that the anger of God rested upon this ancient and illustrious Pomeranian race, and that he had given it over helplessly to the power of the evil one.

Summa.—On the 9th February, the princely corse was laid in the very sleigh which had brought it a living body, and followed by a grand train of princes, nobles, and knights, along with a strong guard of the ducal soldateska, was conveyed back to Stettin; and there, with all due and befitting ceremonies, was buried on Palm Sunday, in the vault of the castle church.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW BARNIM THE TENTH SUCCEEDS TO THE GOVERNMENT, AND
HOW SIDONIA MEETS HIM AS SHE IS GATHERING BILBERRIES.
ITEM, OF THE UNNATURAL WITCH-STORM AT HIS GRACE'S
FUNERAL, AND HOW DUKE CASIMIR REFUSES, IN CONSEQUENCE,
TO SUCCEED HIM.

Now Barnim the Tenth succeeded to that very duchy, about which he had been so wroth the day of the Diet at Wollin, but it brought him little good. He was, however, a pious man, and much beloved at his dower of Rügenwald,

where he spent his time in making a little library of all the Lutheran hymn-books which he could collect, and these he carried with him in his carriage wherever he went; so that his subjects of Rügenwald shed many tears at losing so pious a ruler.

Item, the moment his Grace succeeded to the government, he caused all the courts to be re-opened, along with the Treasury and the Chancery, which his deceased Grace had kept closed to the last; and for this goodness towards his people, the states of the kingdom promised to pay all his debts, which was done; and thus lawlessness and robbery were crushed in the land.

But woe, alas!—Sidonia can no man crush! She wrote immediately to his Grace, soliciting the *præbenda*, and even presented herself at the ducal house of Stettin; but his Grace positively refused to lay eyes on her, knowing how fatal a meeting with her had proved to each of his brothers, who no sooner met her evil glance than they sickened and died.

Therefore his Highness held all old women in abhorrence. Indeed such was his fear of them, that not one was allowed to approach the castle; and when he rode or drove out, lacqueys and squires went before with great horsewhips, to chase away all the old women out of his Grace's path, for truly Sidonia might be amongst them. From this, it came to pass that as soon as it was rumoured in the town, "His Grace is coming," all the old mothers seized up their patens and scampered off, helter-skelter, to get out of reach of the horsewhips.

But who can provide against all the arts of the devil? for though it is true that Sidonia destroyed his two brothers, also his Grace himself, along with Philip II.—by her breath and glance, yet she caused a great number of other unfortunate persons to perish, without using these means, as we shall hear further on; whereby many imagined that her familiar Chim could not have been so weak a spirit as she represented him, on the rack, in order to save her life, but a strong and terrible demon. These things, however, will come in their proper place.

Summa.—After Duke Barnim had reigned several years,

with great blessing to his people, it happened that word came from Rügenwald how that his brother, Duke Casimir, was sick. This was the prince whom we may remember Sidonia had whipped with her irreverent hands upon his princely *podex*, when he was a little boy.

Now Duke Barnim had quarrelled with the Estates because they refused funds for the Turkish war, however he became somewhat merrier that evening with the Count Stephen of Naugard, when the evil tidings came to him of his beloved brother (yet more bitter sorrow is before him, I think). So the next morning the Duke set off with a train of six carriages to visit his sick brother, and by the third evening they reached the wood which lies close beside Rügenwald. Here there was a large oak, the stem of which had often served his Grace for a target, when he amused himself by practising firing. So he stopped the carriage, and alighted to see if the twenty or thirty balls he had shot into it were still there.

But alas! as he reached the oak, that devil's spectre (I mean Sidonia) stepped from behind it; she had an old pot in her hand filled with bilberries, and asked his Grace, would he not take some to refresh himself after his journey.

His Highness, however, recoiled horror-struck, and asked who she was.

She was Sidonia von Bork, and prayed his Grace yet once more for the *præbenda* in Marienfliess.

Hereat the Duke was still more horrified, and exclaimed: "Curse upon thy *præbenda*, but thou shalt get something else, I warrant thee! Thou art a vile witch, and hast in thy mind to destroy our whole noble race with thy detestable sorceries."

Illa.—"Alas! no one had called her a witch before; how could she bewitch them? It was a strange story to tell of her."

The Duke.—"How did it happen, then, that he had no children by his beloved Amrick?"*

Illa (laughing).—"He better ask his beloved Amrick herself. How could she know?"

* Anna Maria, second daughter of John George, Elector of Brandenburg.

But here she began to contort her face horribly, and to spit out, whereupon the Duke called out to his retinue: "Come here, and hang me this hag upon the oak-tree; she is at her devil's sorceries again! And woe! woe! already I feel strange pains all through my body!"

Upon this, divers persons sprang forward to seize her, but the nimble night-bird darted behind a clump of fir-trees, and disappeared. Unluckily they had no bloodhounds along with them, otherwise I think the devil would have been easily seized, and hung up like an acorn on the oak-tree. But God did not so will it, for though they sent a pack of hounds from Rügenwald, the moment they arrived there, yet no trace of the hag could be found in the forest.

And now mark the result; the Duke became worse hour by hour, and as Duke Casimir had grown much better by the time he arrived, and was in a fair way of recovery, his Grace resolved to take leave of him and return with all speed to his own house at Stettin, but on the second day, while they were still a mile from Stettin, Duke Barnim grew so much worse, that they had to stop at Alt-Damm for the night. And scarcely had he laid himself down in bed when he expired. This was on the 1st of September, 1603, when he was fifty-four years, six months, sixteen days, and sixteen hours old.

But the old unclean night-bird would not let his blessed Highness go to his grave in peace (probably because he had called her an accursed witch). For the eighteenth of the same month, when all the nobles and estates were assembled to witness the ceremonial of interment, along with several members of the ducal house, and other illustrious personages, such a storm of hail, rain, and wind, came on just at a quarter to three, as they had reached the middle of the service, that the priest dropped the book from his hands, and the church became so suddenly dark, that the sexton had to light the candles to enable the preacher to read his text. Never, too, was heard such thunder, so that many thought St. Jacob's tower had fallen in, and the princes and nobles rushed out of the church to shelter themselves in the houses, while the most terrific lightning flashed round them at every step.

Yet truly it must have been all witch-work, for when the funeral was over, the weather became as serene and beautiful as possible.

And a great gloom fell upon every one in consequence, for that it was no natural storm, a child could have seen. Indeed, Dr. Joel, who was wise in these matters, declared to his Highness Duke Bogislaff the XIII. that without doubt it was a witch-storm, for the doctor was present at the funeral, as representative of the University of Grypswald. And respecting the clouds, he observed particularly that they were formed like dog's tails, that is when a dog carries his tail in the air so that it forms an arc of a circle. And this indeed was the truth.

Summa.—As by the death of Duke Barnim, the government devolved upon Duke Casimir of Rügenwald, the Estates proceeded thither to offer him their homage, but the Prince hesitated, said he was sickly, and who could tell whether it would not go as ill with him as with his brothers? But the Estates, both temporal and spiritual, prayed him so earnestly to accept the rule, that he promised to meet them on the next morning by ten of the clock, in the great Rittersaal (knights' hall), and make them acquainted with his decision.

The faithful states considered this a favourable answer, and were in waiting next morning, at the appointed hour, in the Rittersaal. But what happened? behold as the great door was thrown open, in walked the Duke, not with any of the insignia of his princely station, but in the dress of a fisherman. He wore a linen jacket, a blue smock, a large hat, and great high fisher's boots, reaching nearly to his waist. Item, on his back the Duke carried a fisherman's basket; six fishermen similarly dressed accompanied him, and others in a like garb followed.

All present wondered much at this, and a great murmur arose in the hall, but the Duke threw his basket down by his side, and leaned his elbow on it, while he thus went on to speak:—"Ye see here, my good friends, what government I intend to hold in future with these honest fishers, who accompanied me up to my dear brother's funeral. I shall return this day to Rügenwald. The devil may rule

in Pomerania, but I will not; if you kill an ox there is an end of it, but here there is no end. Satan treats us worse than the poor ox. Choose a duke wheresoever you will, but as for me, I think fishing and ruling the rudder is pleasanter work than to rule your land."

And when the unambitious Prince had so spoken, he drew forth a little flask containing *branntwein** (a new drink which some esteemed more excellent than wine, which, however, I leave in its old pre-eminence; I tasted the other indeed but once, but it seemed to me to set my mouth on fire—such is not for my drinking), and drank to the fishers, crying, "What say you, children, shall we not go and flounder again upon the Rügenwald strand?" Upon which they all shouted "Ay! ay!"

His Grace then drank to the states for a farewell, and leaving the hall, proceeded with his followers to the vessel, which he ascended, singing gaily, and sailed home directly to his new fishing-lodge at Neuhausen.

Such humility, however, availed his Grace nothing in preserving him from the claws of Satan; for scarcely a year and a-half had elapsed when he was seized suddenly, even as his brothers, and died on the 10th May, 1605, at the early age of forty-eight years, one month, twenty-one days, and seventeen hours.

But to return to the states. They were dumb with grief and despair when his Grace left the hall. The land marshal stood with the staff, the court marshal with the sword, and the chancellor with the seals, like stone statues there, till a noble at the window called out:—

"Let us hasten quickly to Prince Bogislaff, before he journeys off too with his five sons, and we are left without any ruler. See, there are the horses just putting to his carriage!"

Upon this, they all ran out to the coach, and the chancellor asked in a lamentable voice, "If his Grace were indeed going to leave them, like that other gracious Prince who owned the dukedom by right? The states would promise everything he desired—they would pay all his debts—only

* Whiskey.

his Grace must not leave them and their poor fatherland in their sore need."

Hereat his Grace laughed, and told them "He was not going to his castle of Franzburg, only as far as Oderkrug, with his dear sons, to look at the great sheep-pens there, and drink a bowl of ewe's milk with the shepherds under the apple-tree. He hoped to arrive there before his brother Casimir in his boat, and then they might discuss the *casus* together; indeed, when he showed him the sheep-pens, it was not probable that he would refuse a duchy which had a fold of twenty thousand sheep, for his brother Casimir was a great lover of sheep as well as of fish."

Upon this, the states and privy council declared that they would follow him to Oderkrug to learn the result, but meanwhile begged of his Grace not to delay setting off, lest Duke Casimir might have left Oderkrug before he reached it.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DUKE BOGISLAF F XIII. ACCEPTS THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DUCHY, AND GIVES SIDONIA AT LAST THE LONG DESIRED PRÆBENDA.—ITEM, OF HER ARRIVAL AT THE CONVENT OF MARIENFLIESS.

Now my gracious Lord Bogislaff had scarcely alighted at Oderkrug from his carriage, and drunk a bowl of milk under the apple-tree, when he spied the yellow sails of his brother's boat above the high reeds; upon which he ran down to the shore, and called out himself:—

"Will you not land, brother, and drink a bowl of ewe's milk with us, or take a glance at the great sheep-pen? It is a rare wonder, and my Lord brother was always a great lover of sheep!"

But Prince Casimir went on, and never slackened sail. Whereupon his Highness called out again: "The states and privy councillors are coming, brother, and want to have a few words with you."

Hereat Prince Casimir laughed in the boat, and returned

for answer,—“He knew well enough what they wanted; but, no—he had no desire to be bewitched to death. Just give him the lands of Lauenburg and Butow, as an addition to his dower, and then his dear Bogislaff might take all Pomerania to himself if he pleased.”

After which, doffing his hat for an *addio*, he steered bravely through the *Pappenwasser*.

When young Prince Franz heard this, he laughed loud, and said: “Truly our uncle is the wisest—he will not be bewitched to death, as he says—but what will my Lord father do now, for see, here come the states already in their carriages over the hill!”

Duke Bogislaff answered: “What else remains for me to do but to accept the government?”

Ille,—“Yes, and be struck dead by witchcraft, like my three uncles! Ah, my gracious Lord father, before ever you accept the rule of the duchy, let the witch be seized and burned. Doctor Joel hath told me much about these witches; and believe me, there is no wiser man in all Pomerania than this Magister. He can do something more than eat bread.”

Then he fell upon his father’s neck, and caressed him: “Ah, dear father, do not jump at once into the government; burn the witch first: we cannot spare our dear Lord father!”

And the two young Princes, George and Ulrich, prayed him in like manner; but young Philip Secundus spake: “I think, brothers, it were better if our dear father gave this long talked-of *præbenda* to the witch at once; then, whether she bewitches or not, we are safe at all events.”

Hereupon his Highness answered: “My Philip is right; for in truth no one can say whether your uncles died by Sidonia’s sorceries or by those of the evil man Bacchus. Therefore I warn you, dear children, flee from this worst of all sorcerers; not starting at appearances, as a horse at a shadow, for appearance is the shadow of truth. Be admonished, therefore, by St. Peter, and ‘gird up the loins of your spirit: be *sober*, and watch unto prayer.’ Then ye may laugh all witches to scorn; for God will turn the devices of your enemy to folly.”

Meanwhile the states have arrived; and having alighted from their coaches at the great sheep-pen, they advanced respectfully to the Duke, who was seated under the apple-tree—the land marshal first, with the staff, then the court marshal with the sword, and lastly the chancellor with the seals.

They had seen from the hill how Duke Casimir sailed away without waiting to hear them, and prayed and hoped that his Highness would accept the insignia which they here respectfully tendered, and not abandon his poor fatherland in such dire need. The devil and wicked men could do much, but God could do more, as none knew better than his Highness.

Herewith his Grace sighed deeply, and taking the insignia, laid staff and sword beside him; then, taking up the sword hastily again, he held it in his hand while he thus spake:—

“My faithful, true, and honourable states, ye know how that I resigned the government, out of free will, at the Diet at Wollin, because I thought, and still think, that nothing weighs heavier than this sword which I hold in my hand. Therefore I went to my dower at Barth, and have founded the beautiful little town of Franzburg to keep the Stralsund knaves in submission, and also to teach our nobles that there is some nobler work for a man to do in life than eating, drinking, and hunting. Item, I have encouraged commerce, and especially given my protection to the woollen trade; but all my labours will now fall to the ground, and the Stralsund knaves be overjoyed;* however, I must obey God’s will, and not kick against the pricks. Therefore I take the sword of my father, hoping that it will not prove too heavy for me, an old man;† and that He who puts it into my hand (even the strong God) will help me to bear it.” So let his holy will be done.—Amen.

Then his Highness delivered back the insignia to the

* The apprehension was justified by the event; for on the departure of Duke Bogislaff, Franzburg fell rapidly to a mere village, to the great joy of the Stralsunders, who looked with much envy on a new town springing up in their vicinity.

† The Duke was then sixty.

states, who reverently kissed his hand, and blessed God for having given so good and pious Prince to reign over them. Then they approached the five young Lords, and kissed their hands likewise, wishing at the same time that many fair olive branches might yet stand around their table. This made the old Duke laugh heartily, and he prayed the states to remain a little and drink ewe's milk with them for a pleasant pastime; the shepherds would set out the bowls.

Duke Philip alone went away into the town to examine the library, and all the vases, pictures, statues, and other costly works of art, which his deceased uncle, Duke Johann Frederick, had collected; and these he delivered over to the marshal's care, with strict injunctions as to their preservation.

But a strange thing happened next day; for as the Duke and his sons were sitting at breakfast, and the wine-can had just been locked up, because each young Lord had drunk his allotted portion, namely, seven glasses (the Duke himself only drank six), a lacquey entered with a note from Sidonia, in which she again demanded the *præbenda*, and hoped that his Highness would be more merciful than his dead brothers, now that he had succeeded to the duchy. Let him, therefore, send an order for her admission to the cloister of Marienfiess. The answer was to be laid upon St. Mary's altar.

Here young Lord Francis grew quite pale, and dropped the fork from his hands, then spake: "Now, truly, we see this hag learns of the devil, for how else could she have known that our gracious father had accepted the government, unless Satan had visited her in her den? But let his dearest father be careful. In his opinion, the Duke should promise her the *præbenda*; but as soon as the accursed hag showed herself at the cloister (for the devil now kept her concealed), let her be seized and burned publicly, for a terrible warning and example."

This advice did not please the old Duke. "Franz," he said, "thou art a fool, and God forbid that ever thou shouldst reign in the land; for know that the word of a prince is sacred. Yes, Sidonia shall have the *præbenda*;

but I will not entrap my enemy through deceit to death, but will try to win her over by gentleness. The chancellor shall answer her instantly, and write another letter to the abbess of Petersdorf; and Sidonia's shall be laid upon the altar of St. Mary's this night, as she requested, by one of my lacqueys."

Then Duke Philip kissed his pious father's hand, and the tears fell from the good youth's eyes as he exclaimed—

"Alas, if she should murder you too!"

And here are the two letters, according to the copies which are yet to be seen in the princely chancery. *Sub. litt. Marienfließ K*, No. 683.

"WE, BOGISLAFF, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, DUKE OF STETTIN, POMERANIA, CASSUBEN, AND WENDEN; PRINCE OF RUGEN; COUNT OF CUTZKOW, OF THE LANDS OF LAUENBURG AND BUTOW; LORD, ETC.

"In consequence of your repeated entreaties for a *præbenda* in the cloister of Marienfließ, We, of our great goodness, hereby grant the same unto you; hoping that, in future, you will lead an humble, quiet life, as beseems a cloistered maiden, and, in especial, that you will always show yourself an obedient and faithful servant of our Princely House. So we commit you to God's keeping!

"Signatum, Old Stettin, the 20th October, 1603.

"BOGISLAFF."

The other letter, to the abbess of Petersdorf, was sent by a salmon lad to the convent, as we shall hear further on, and ran thus:—

"WE, BOGISLAFF, ETC.

"WORTHY ABBESS, TRUSTY AND WELL-BELOVED FRIEND!

"Hereby We send to you a noble damsel, named Sidonia von Bork, and desire a cell for her in your cloisters, even as the other nuns. We trust that misery may have softened her heart towards God, but if she do not demean herself with Christian sobriety, you have our commands to send her, along with the fish peasants and others, to our court for judgment,

"God keep you; pray for us!

"Signatum, etc.

"BOGISLAFF."

The letter to Sidonia was, in truth, laid that same night upon the altar of St. Mary's, by a lacquey, who was further desired to hide himself in the church, and see what became

of it. Now, the fellow had a horrible dread of staying alone in the church by night, so he took the cook, Jeremias Bild, along with him; and after they had laid the letter down upon the altar, they crept both of them into a high pew close by, belonging to the Anlick Counsellor, Dieterick Stempel.

Now mark what happened. They had been there about an hour, and the moon was pouring down as clear as daylight from the high altar window; when, all at once, the letter upon the altar began to move about of itself, as if it were alive, then it hopped down upon the floor, from that danced down the altar steps, and so on all along the nave, though no human being laid hands on it the while, and not a breath or stir was heard in the church.*

Our two carls nearly died of the fright, and solemnly attested by oath to his Highness the truth of their relation. Thereby young Lord Franz was more strengthened in this belief concerning Sidonia's witchcraft, and had many arguments with his father in consequence.

"His Lord father might easily know that a letter could not move of itself, without devil's magic. Now this letter had moved of itself; *ergo*," &c.

Whereupon his Highness answered—

"When had he ever doubted the power of Satan? Ah, never; but in this instance who could tell what the carls in their fright had seen or not seen? For, perhaps, Sidonia, when she observed them hiding in the pew, had stuck a fish-hook into the letter, and so drawn it over to herself. He remembered in his youth a trick that had been played on the patron—for this patron always went to sleep during the sermon. So the sexton let down a fish-hook through the ceiling of the church, which, catching hold of the patron's wig, drew it up in the sight of the whole congregation, who afterwards swore that they had seen the said wig of their patron carried up to the roof of the church by witchcraft, and disappear through a hole in the ceiling, as if it had been a bird. Some time after, however, the sexton

* Something similar is related in the *Scherin of Prevorst*, where a glass of water moved of its own accord to another place.

confessed his knavery, and the patron's flying wig had been a standing joke in the country ever since."

But the young lord still shook his head—

"Ah, they would yet see who was right. He was still of the same opinion."

But I shall leave these arguments at once, for the result will fully show which party was in the right.

Summa.—Sidonia, next day, drove in her one-horse cart again to the convent gate at Marienfließ, accompanied by another old hag as her servant. Now the peasants had just arrived with the salmon, which the Duke despatched every fortnight as a present to the convent, and the letter of his Grace had arrived also. So many of the nuns were assembled on the great steps looking at the fish, and waiting for the abbess to divide it amongst them, as was her custom. Others were gathered round the abbess, weeping as she told them of the Duke's letter, and the good mother herself nearly fainted when she read it.

So Sidonia drove straight into the court, as the gates were lying open, and shouted—

"What the devil! Is this a nuns' cloister, where all the gates lie open, and the carls come in and out as if it were a dove-cot? Shame on ye, for light wantons! Wait; Sidonia will bring you into order. Ha! ye turned me out, but now ye must have me, whether ye will or no!"

At such blasphemies the nuns were struck dumb. However, the abbess seemed as though she heard them not, but advancing, bid Sidonia welcome, and said—

"It was not possible to receive her into the cloister, until she had command from his Grace so to do, which command she now held in her hand."

This softened Sidonia somewhat, and she asked—

"What are the nuns doing there with the fish?"

"Dividing the salmon," was the answer.

Whereupon she jumped out of the cart, and declared that she must get her portion also, for salmon was a right good thing for supper.

Whereupon, the sub-prioress, Dorothea von Stettin, cut her off a fine large head-piece, which Sidonia however pushed away scornfully, crying—

"Fie! what did she mean by that? The devil might eat the head-piece, but give her the tail. She had never in her life eaten anything but the tail-piece; the tail was fatter."

So the abbess signed to them to give her the tail-end; after which, she asked to see her cell, and, on being shown it, cried out again—

"Fie on them! was that a cell for a lady of her degree? Why, it was a pig-stye. Let the abbess put her young litter of nuns there; they would be better in it than running up and down the convent court with the fish-carls. She must and will have the refectory."

And when the abbess answered—

"That was the prayer-room, where the sisters met night and morning for vespers and matins;" she heeded not, but said—

"Let them pray in the chapel—the chapel is large enough."

And so saying, she commanded her maid, who was no other than Wolde Albrechts, though not a soul in the convent knew her, to carry all her luggage straight into the refectory.

What could the poor abbess do? She had to submit, and not only give her up the refectory, but, finding that she had no bed, order one in for her. Item—seeing that Sidonia was in rags, she desired black serge for a robe to be brought, and a white veil, such as the sisterhood wore, and bid the nuns stitch them up for her, thinking thus to win her over by kindness. Also, she desired tables, stools, &c. to be arranged in the refectory, since she so ardently desired to possess this room. But what fruit all this kindness brought forth we shall see in *liber tertius*.

BOOK III.

FROM THE RECEPTION OF SIDONIA INTO THE CONVENT AT
MARIENFLIESS UP TILL HER EXECUTION, AUGUST 19TH, 1620.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE SUB-PRIORESS DOROTHEA STETTIN VISITS SIDONIA AND
EXTOLS HER VIRTUE.—ITEM; OF SIDONIA'S QUARREL WITH
THE DAIRY-WOMAN, AND HOW SHE BEATS THE SHERIFF HIM-
SELF, EGGERT SPARLING, WITH A BROOM-STICK.

MOST eminent and illustrious Prince! your Serene Highness will surely pardon me if I pass over, *in libro tertio*, many of the quarrels, bickerings, strifes, and evil deeds, with which Sidonia disturbed the peace of the convent, and brought many a goodly person therein to a cruel end; first, because these things are already much known and talked of; and secondly, because such dire and Satanic wickedness must not be so much as named to gentle ears by me.

I shall, therefore, only set down a few of the principal events of her convent life, by which your Grace and others may easily conjecture much of what still remains unsaid; for truly wickedness advanced and strengthened in her day by day, as decay in a rotting tree.

The morning after her arrival in the convent, while it was yet quite early, and Wolde Albrechts, her lame maid, was sweeping out the refectory, the sub-prioress, Dorothea Stettin, came to pay her a visit. She had a piece of salmon, and a fine haddock's liver on a plate to present to the lady, and was full of joy and gratitude that so pious and chaste a maiden should have entered this convent. "Ah, yes! it

was indeed terrible to see how the convent gates lay open, and the men-folk walked in and out, as the lady herself had seen yesterday. And would sister Sidonia believe it, sometimes the carls came in bare-legged? Not alone old Matthias Winterfeld, the convent porter, but others—yea, even in their shirt-sleeves sometimes—oh, it was shocking even to think of! She had talked about it long enough, but no one heeded her, though truly, she was sub-prioress, and ought to have authority. However, if sister Sidonia would make common cause with her from this time forth, modesty and sobriety might yet be brought back to their blessed cloister.”

Sidonia desired nothing better than to make common cause with the good simple Dorothea—but for her own purposes. Therefore she answered: “Ay, truly; this matter of the open gates was a grievous sin and shame. What else were these giddy wantons thinking of but lovers and matrimony? She really blushed to see them yesterday.”

Illa.—“True, true; that was just it. All about love and marriage was the talk for ever amongst them. It made her heart die within her to think what the young maidens were now-a-days.”

Hæc.—“Had she any instances to bring forward; what had they done?”

Illa.—“Alas! instances enough. Why not long since, a nun had married with a clerk, and this last chaplain, David Grosskopf, had taken another nun to wife himself.”

Hæc.—“Oh, she was ready to faint with horror.”

Illa.—(Sobbing, weeping, and falling upon Sidonia’s neck) “God be praised that she had found one righteous soul in this Sodom and Gomorrah. Now she would swear friendship to her for life and death! And had she a little drop of wine, just to pour on the haddock’s liver? it tasted so much better stewed in wine! but she would go for some of her own. The liver must just get one turn on the fire, and then the butter and spices have to be added. She would teach her how to do it if she did not know, only let the old maid make up the fire.”

Hæc.—“What was she talking about? Cooking was child’s play to her; she had other things to cook than haddocks’ livers.”

Illa.—(Weeping) “Ah! let not her chaste sister be angry; she had meant it all in kindness.”

Hæc.—“No doubt—but why did she call the convent a Sodom and Gomorrah? Did the nuns ever admit a lover into their cells?”

Illa.—(Screaming with horror) “No, no, fie! how could the chaste sister bring her lips to utter such words?”

Hæc.—“What did she mean, then, by the Sodom and Gomorrah?”

Illa.—“Alas! the whole world was a Sodom and Gomorrah, why then not the convent, since it lay in the world? for though we do not sin in words or works, yet we may sin in thought, and this was evidently the case with some of these young things, for if the talk, in their hearing, was of marriage, they laughed and tittered, so that it was a scandal and abomination!”

Hæc.—“But had she anything else to tell her—what had she come for?”

Illa.—“Ah! she had forgotten. The abbess sent to say, that she must begin to knit the gloves directly for the canons of Camyn. Here was the thread.”

Hæc.—“Thousand devils! what did she mean?”

Illa.—(Crossing herself) “Ah! the pious sister might let the devils alone, though (God be good to us) the world was indeed full of them!”

Hæc.—“What did she mean then by this knitting—to talk to her so—the lady of castles and lands?”

Illa.—“Why the matter was thus. The reverend canons of Camyn, who were twelve in number, purchased their beer always from the convent—for such had been the usage from the old Catholic times—and sent a wagon regularly every half year to fetch it home. In return for this goodness, the nuns knit a pair of thread gloves for each canon in spring, and a pair of woollen ones in winter.”

Hæc.—“Then the devil may knit them if he chooses, but she never will. What! a lady of her rank to knit gloves for these old fat paunches! No, no; the abbess must come to her! Send a message to bid her come.”

And truly, in a little time, the abbess Magdalena von *Petersdorf*, came as she was bid; for she had resolved to

try and conquer Sidonia's pride and insolence by softness and humility.

But what a storm of words fell upon the worthy matron!

"Was this treatment, forsooth, for a noble lady? To be told to knit gloves for a set of lazy canons. Marry, she had better send the men at once to her room, to have them tried on. No wonder that levity and wantonness should reign throughout the convent!"

Here the good mother interposed—

"But could not sister Sidonia moderate her language a little? Such violence ill-became a spiritual maiden. If she would not hold by the old usage, let her say so quietly, and then she herself, the abbess, would undertake to knit the gloves, since the work so displeased her."

Then she turned to leave the room, but, on opening the door, tumbled right against sister Anna Apenborg, who was stuck up close to it, with her ear against the crevice, listening to what was passing inside. Anna screamed at first, for the good mother's head had given her a stont blow, but recovering quickly, as the two prioresses passed out, curtsied to Sidonia—

"Her name was Anna Apenborg. Her father, Elias, dwelt in Nadrensee, near old Stettin, and her great-great-grandfather Caspar had been with Bogislaff X. in the Holy Land. She had come to pay her respects to the new sister, for she was cooking in the kitchen yesterday when the lady arrived, and never got a sight of her, but she heard that this dear new sister was a great lady, with castles and lands. Her father's cabin was only a poor thing thatched with straw," &c.

All this pleased the proud Sidonia mightily, so she beckoned her into the room, where the aforesaid Anna immediately began to stare about her, and devour everything with her eyes; but seeing such scanty furniture, remarked inquiringly—

"The dear sister's goods are, of course, on the road?"

This spoiled all Sidonia's good humour in a moment, and she snappishly asked—

"What brought her there?"

Hereupon the other excused herself—

"The maid had told her that the dear sister was going to eat her salmon for her lunch, with bread and butter, but it was much better with kale, and if she had none, her maid might come down now and cut some in the garden. This was what she had to say. She heard indeed that the sub-prioress and Agnes Kleist ate their salmon stewed in butter, but that was too rich; for one should be very particular about salmon, it was so apt to disagree. However, if sister Sidonia would just mind her, she would teach her all the different ways of dressing it, and no one was ever the worse for eating salmon, if they followed her plan."

But before Sidonia had time to answer, the chatter-box had run to the door and lifted the latch—

"There was a strange woman in the court-yard, with something under her apron. She must go and see what it was, but would be back again instantly with the news."

In a short time she returned, bringing along with her Sheriff Sparling's dairy-woman, who carried a large bundle of flax under her apron. This she set down before Sidonia—

"And his Worship bid her say that she must spin all this for him without delay, for he wanted a new set of shirts, and the thread must be with the weaver by Christmas."

When Sidonia heard this, she fell into a right rage in earnest—

"May the devil ring his ears, the peasant carl! To send such a message to a lady of her degree!"

Then she pitched the flax out of the door, and wanted to shove the dairy-woman out after it, but she stopped, and said—

"His Worship gave all the nuns a bushel of seed for their trouble, and sowed it for them; so she had better do as the others did."

Sidonia, however, was not to be appeased—

"May the devil take her and her flax, if she did not trot out of that instantly."

So she pushed the poor woman out, and then panting and blowing with rage, asked Anna Apenborg to tell her what this boor of a sheriff was like?"

Illa.—“He was a strange man. Ate fish every day, and always cooked the one way—namely, in beer. How this was possible she could not understand. To-day she heard he was to have pike for his dinner.”

Hæc.—“Was she asking the fool what he ate? What did she care about his dinners? But what sort of man was he, and did all the nuns in truth spin for him?”

Illa.—“Ay, truly, except Barbara Schetzkow; she was dead now. But once when he went storming to her cell, she just turned him out, and so she had peace ever after. For he roared like a bear, but, in truth, was a cowardly rabbit this same sheriff. And she heard, that one time, when he was challenged by a noble, he shrank away, and never stood up to his quarrel.”

But just then, in walked the sheriff himself, with a horse-whip in his hand. He was a thick-set, gray-headed fellow, and roared at Sidonia—

“What? thou old, lean hag—so thou wilt spin no flax? May the devil take thee, but thou shalt obey my commands!”

While he thus scolded, Sidonia quietly caught hold of the broom, and grasping it with both hands, gave such a blow with the handle on the gray pate of the sheriff that he tumbled against the door, while she screamed out—

“Ha! thou peasant boor, take that for calling me a hag—the lady of castle and lands!”

Then she struck him again and again, till the sheriff at last got the door open and bolted out, running down the stairs as hard as he could, and into the court-yard, where, when he was safely landed, he shook the horsewhip up at Sidonia’s windows, crying out—

“I will make you pay dear for this. Anna Apenborg was witness of the assault. I will swear information this very day before his Highness, how the hag assaulted me, the sheriff, and superintendent of the convent, in the performance of my duty; and pray him to deliver an honourable cloister from the presence of such a vagabond.”

Then he went to the abbess, and begged her and the nuns to sustain him in his accusation—

“Such wickedness and arrogance had never yet been

seen under the sun. Let the good abbess only feel his head; there was a lump as big as an egg on it. Truly, he had had a mind to horsewhip her black and blue; but that would have been illegal; so he thanked God that he had restrained himself."

Then he made the abbess feel his head again; also, Anna Apenborg, who happened to come in that moment.

But the worthy mother knew not what to do. She told the sheriff of Sidonia's behaviour as she drove into the convent; also, how she had possessed herself of the refectory by force, refused to knit or spin, and had sent for her, the abbess, bidding her come to her, as if she were no better than a serving-wench.

At last, the sheriff desired all the nuns to be sent for, and in their presence drew up a petition to his Highness, praying that the honourable convent might be delivered from the presence of this dragon, for that no peace could be expected within the walls until this vagabond and evil-minded old hag were turned out on the road again, or wherever else his Highness pleased. Every one present signed this, with the exception of Anna Apenborg and the sub-prioress Dorothea Stettin. And many think that in consideration of this gentleness, Sidonia afterwards spared their lives, and did not bring them to a premature grave, like as she did the worthy abbess and others.

For, the next time that she caught Anna at her old habit of listening, Sidonia said, while boxing her—

"You should get something worse than a box on the ear, only for your refusal to sign that lying petition to his Highness."

Summa.—After a few days, an answer arrived from his Grace the Duke of Stettin, and the abbess, with the sheriff, proceeded with it to Sidonia's apartment.

They found her brewing beer, an art in which she excelled; and the letter which they handed to her ran thus, according to the copy received likewise by the convent—

"WE, BOGISLAF, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, DUKE OF
"STETTIN, ETC.

"Having heard from our sheriff and the pious sisterhood of Marien-floss, of thy unseemly behaviour, in causing uproars and tumults in

the convent; further of thy having struck our worthy sheriff on the head with a broom-stick, We hereby declare, desire, and command, that, unless thou givest due obedience to the authorities, lay and spiritual, doing this well, with humility and meekness, even as the other sisters, the said authorities shall have full power to turn thee out of the convent, by means of their bailiffs or otherwise, as they please, giving thee back again to that perdition from which thou wast rescued. Further; thou art herewith to deliver up the refectory to the abbess, of which We hear thou hast shamefully possessed thyself.

“Old Stettin, 10th November, 1603.

“BOGISLAFF.”

Sidonia scarcely looked at the letter, but thrust it under the pot on the fire, where it soon blazed away to help the brewing, and exclaimed—

“They had forged it between them; the prince never wrote a line of it. Nor would he have sent it to her by the hands of her enemies. Let it burn there. Little trouble would she take to read their villiany. But never fear, they should have something in return for their pains.”

Hereupon she blew on them both, and they had scarcely reached the court, after leaving her apartment, when both were seized with excruciating pains in their limbs; both the sheriff and the abbess were affected in precisely the same way—a violent pain first in the little finger, then on through the hand, up the arm; finally throughout the whole frame, as if the members were tearing asunder, till they both screamed aloud for very agony. Doctor Schwalenberg is sent for from Stargard, but his salve does no good; they grow worse rather, and their cries are dreadful to listen to, for the pain has become intolerable.

So my brave sheriff turns from a roaring ox into a poor cowardly hare, and sends off the dairy-woman with a fine haunch of venison and a sweet-bread to Sidonia: “His Worship’s compliments to the illustrious lady with these, and begged to know if she could send him anything good for the rheumatism, which had attacked him quite suddenly. The Stargard doctor was not worth the air he breathed, and his salve had only made him worse in place of better. He would send the illustrious lady also some pounds of wax-

lights; she might like them through the winter, but they were not made yet."

When Sidonia heard this she laughed loudly, danced about, and repeated the verse which was then heard for the first time from her lips; but afterwards she made use of it, when about any evil deed:—

"Also kleien und also kratzen,
Meine Hunde und meine Katzen."*

The dairy-women stood by in silent wonder, first looking at Sidonia, then at Wolde, who began to dance likewise, and chanted:—

"Also kleien und also kratzen,
Unsre Hunde und unsre Katzen."†

At last Sidonia answered: "This time I will help him; but if he ever bring the roaring ox out of the stall again, assuredly he will repent it."

Hereon the dairy-mother turned to depart, but suddenly stood quite still, staring at Anne Wolde; at length said,—
"Did I not see thee years ago spinning flax in my mother's cellar, when the folk wanted to bring thee to an ill end?"

But the hag denied it all: "The devil may have been in her mother's cellar, but she had never seen Marienfliess in her life before, till she came hither with this illustrious lady."

So the other seemed to believe her, and went out, and by the time she reached her master's door, his pains had all vanished, so that he rode that same day at noon to the hunt.

The poor abbess heard of all this through Anna Apenborg, and thereupon bethought herself of a little embassy likewise.

So she bid Anna take all sorts of good pastry—and a new kettle, and greet the Lady Sidonia from her: "Could the dear sister give her anything for the rheumatism? She heard the sheriff was quite cured, and all the doctor's salves

* "So claw and so scratch
My dogs and my cats."

† "So claw and so scratch
Our dogs and our cats."

and plasters were only making her worse. She sent the dear sister a few dainties—item, a new kettle, as her own kettle had not yet arrived. Item, she begged her acceptance of all the furniture, &c. which she had lent her for her apartment.

At this second message the horrible witch laughed and danced as before, repeating the same couplet; and the old hag, Wolde, danced behind her like her shadow.

Now Anna Apenborg's curiosity was excited in the highest degree at all this, and her feet began to beat up and down on the floor as if she were dying to dance likewise; at last she exclaimed: "Ah, dear lady! what is the meaning of that? Could you not teach it to me, if it cures the rheumatism? that is, if there be no devil's work in it (from which God keep us). I have twelve pounds of wool lying by me; will you take it, dear Lady, for teaching me the secret?"

But Sidonia answered, "Keep your wool, good Anna, and I will keep my secret, seeing that it is impossible for me to teach it to you; for know, that a woman can only learn it of a man, and a man of a woman; and this we call the doctrine of sympathies. However, go your ways now, and tell the abbess that, if she does my will, I will visit her and see what I can do to help her; but, remember, my will she must do."

Hereupon sister Anna was all eagerness to know what her will was, but Sidonia bade her hold her tongue, and then locked up the viands in the press, while Wolde went into the kitchen with the kettle, where Anna Apenborg followed her slowly, to try and pick something out of the old hag, but without any success, as one may easily imagine.

CHAPTER II.

HOW SIDONIA VISITS THE ABBESS, MAGDALENA VON PETERSDORF, AND EXPLAINS HER WISHES, BUT IS DIVERTED TO OTHER OBJECTS BY A SIGHT OF DAVID LUDECK, THE CHAPLAIN TO THE CONVENT.

WHEN Sidonia went to visit the abbess, as she had promised, she found her lying in bed and moaning, so that it might have melted the heart of a stone; but the old witch seemed quite surprised: "What could be the matter with the dear good mother? but by God's help she would try and cure her. Only, concerning this little matter of the refectory, it might as well be settled first, for Anna Apenborg told her the room was to be taken from her, but would not the good mother permit her to keep it?"

And when the tortured matron answered—"Oh, yes; keep it, keep it," Sidonia went on:—

"There was just another little favour she expected for curing her dear mother (for, by God's help, she expected to cure her). This was—to make her sub-prioress in place of Dorothea Stettin; for, in the first place, the situation was due to her rank, she being the most illustrious lady in the convent, dowered with castles and lands; secondly, because her illustrious forefathers had helped to found this convent; and thirdly, it was due to her age, for she was the natural mother of all these young doves, and much more fitted to keep them in order and strict behaviour than Dorothea Stettin."

Here the abbess answered: "How could she make her sub-prioress while the other lived? This was not to be done? Truly sister Dorothea was somewhat prudish and whining, this she could not deny, for she had suffered many crosses in her path; but, withal, she was an upright, honest creature, with the best and simplest heart in the world; and so little selfishness, that verily she would lay down her life for the sisterhood, if it were necessary."

Illa.—"A good heart was all very well, but what could

it do without respect? and how could a poor fool be respected who fell into fits if she saw a bride, particularly here, where the young sisters thought of nothing but marriage, from morning till night."

Hæc.—"Yet she was held in great respect and honour by all the sisterhood, as she herself could testify."

Illa.—"Stuff! she must be sub-prioress, and there was an end of it, or the abbess might lie groaning there till she was as stiff as a pole."

"Alas! Sidonia," answered the abbess, "I would rather lie here as stiff as a pole—or, in other words, lie here a corpse, for I understand thy meaning—than do aught that was unjust."

Illa.—"What was unjust? The old goose need not be turned out of her office by force, but persuaded out of it—that would be an easy matter, if she were so humble and excellent a creature."

Hæc.—"But then deceit must be practised, and that she could never bring herself to."

Illa.—"Yet you could all practise deceit against me, and send off that complaint to his Highness the Prince."

Hæc.—"There was no falsehood there nor deceit, but the openly expressed wish of the whole convent, and of his Worship the sheriff."

Illa.—"Then let the whole convent, and his Worship the sheriff, make her well again; she would not trouble herself about the matter."

Whereupon she rose to depart, but the suffering abbess stretched out her hands, and begged for the sake of Jesus, that she would release her from this torture! "Take everything—everything thou wishest, Sidonia—only leave me my good conscience. Thy dying hour must one day come too; oh! think on that."

Illa.—"The dying hour is a long way off yet" (and she moved to the door).

Hæc.—(Murmuring):—

"Why should health from God estrange thee?
Morning cometh and may change thee;
Life, to-day, its hues may borrow
Where the grave-worm feeds to-morrow."

lila.—“Look to yourself then. Speak! Make me sub-prioress, and be cured on the instant.”

Hæc.—(Turning herself back upon the pillow) “No, no, temptress; begone:—

“‘Softest pillow for the dying,
Is a conscience void of dread.’”

Go, leave me; my life is in the hand of God. ‘For if we live, we live unto the Lord; and if we die, we die unto the Lord. Living, therefore, or dying, we are the Lord’s.’”

So saying, the pious mother turned her face to the wall, and Sidonia went out of the chamber.

In a little while, however, she returned: “Would the good mother promise, at least, to offer no opposition, if Dorothea Stettin proposed, of her own free will, to resign the office of sub-prioress? If so, let her reach forth her hand, she would soon find the pains leave her.”

The poor abbess assented to this, and, oh, wonder! as it came, so it went; first out of the little finger, and then by degrees out of the whole body, so that the old mother wept for joy, and thanked her murderess.

Just then the door opened, and David Ludeck, the chaplain whom the abbess had sent for, entered in his surplice. He was a fine tall man, of about thirty-five years, with bright red lips and jet-black beard.

He wondered much on hearing how the abbess had been cured by what Sidonia called “sympathies,” and smelled devil’s work in it, but said nothing—for he was afraid; spoke kindly to the witch-hag even, and extolled her learning and the nobility of her race; declaring that he knew well that the Von Borks had helped mainly to found this cloister.

This mightily pleased the sorceress, and she grew quite friendly, asking him at last: “What news he had of his wife and children?” And when he answered: “He had no wife nor children,” her eyes lit up again like old cinders, and she began to jest with him about his going about so freely in a cloister, as she observed he did. But when she saw that the priest looked grave at the jestings, she changed her tone, and demurely asked him “If he would

be ready after sermon on Sunday to assist at her assuming the nun's dress; for though many had given up this old usage, yet she would hold by it, for love of Jesu." This pleased the priest, and he promised to be prepared. Then Sidonia took her leave; but scarcely had she reached her own apartment when she sent for Anna Apenborg. "What sort of man was this chaplain? she saw that he went about the convent at his pleasure. This was strange when he was unmarried."

Illa.—"He was a right friendly and well-behaved gentleman. Nothing unseemly in word or deed had ever been heard of him."

Hæc.—"Then he must have some private love-affair."

Illa.—"Some said he was paying court to Bamberg's sister there in Jacobshagen."

Hæc.—"Ha! very probable. But was it true? for otherwise he should never go about amongst the nuns the way he did. It was quite abominable: an unmarried man; Dorothea Stettin was right. But how could they ascertain the fact?"

Illa.—"That was easily done. She was going next morning to Jacobshagen, and would make out the whole story for her. Indeed she herself, too, was curious about it."

Hæc.—"All right. This must be done for the honour of the cloister. For according to the rules of 1569, the court chaplain was to be an *old* man, who should teach the sisters to read and write. Whereas, here was a fine carl with red lips and a black beard; unmarried too. Did he perchance ever teach any of them to read or write?"

Illa.—"No; for they all knew how already."

Hæc.—"Still there was something wrong in it. No, no, in such matters youth has no truth; Dorothea Stettin was quite right. Ah, what a wonderful creature, that excellent Dorothea! Such modesty and purity she had never met with before. Would that all young maidens were like her, and then this wicked world would be something better."

Illa (sighing).—"Ah, yes; but then sister Dorothea went rather far in her notions."

Hæc.—“How so? In these matters one could never go too far.”

Illa.—“Why, when a couple were called in church, or a woman was churched, Dorothea nearly fainted. Then, there was a niche in the chancel for which old Duke Barnim had given them an Adam and Eve, which he turned and carved himself. But Dorothea was quite shocked at the Adam, and made a little apron to hang before him, though the abbess and the whole convent said that it was not necessary. But she told them, that unless Adam wore his apron, never would she set foot in the chapel. Now truly this was going rather far. Item, she has been heard to wonder how the Lord God could send all the animals naked into the world; as cats, dogs, horses, and the like. Indeed she one day disputed sharply on the matter with the chaplain; but he only laughed at her, whereupon Dorothea went away in a sulk.”

Here Sidonia laughed outright too; but soon said with grave decorum: “Quite right. The excellent Dorothea was a treasure above all treasures for the convent. Ah, such chastity and virtue were rarely to be met with in this wicked world.”

Now Anna Apenborg had hardly turned her back, to go and chatter all this back again to the sub-prioress, when Sidonia proceeded to tap some of her beer, and called the convent porter to her—Matthias Winterfeld, bidding him carry it with her greetings to the chaplain, David Ludeck. (For her own maid Wolde was lame, ever since the racking she got at Wolgast. So Sidonia was in the habit of sending the porter of all her messages, much to his annoyance.) When he came now he was in his shirt sleeves, at which Sidonia was wroth: “What did he mean by going about the convent in shirt sleeves? Never let him appear before her eyes in such unseemly trim. And was this a time even for shirt sleeves, when they were in the month of November? but winter or summer he must never appear so.”

Hereupon the fellow excused himself. He was killing geese for some of the nuns, and had just put off his coat, not to have it spoiled by the down; but she is nothing mollified; scolds him still, so the fellow makes off without

another word, fearing he might get a touch of the rheumatism, like the abbess and his worship the sheriff, and carries the beer-can to the reverend chaplain; from whom he soon brings back "his grateful acknowledgments to the Lady Sidonia."

Two days now passed over, but on the third morning Anna Apenborg trotted in to the refectory full of news. She was quite tired from her journey yesterday; for the snow was deep on the roads, but to pleasure sister Sidonia (and besides, as it was a matter that concerned the honour of the convent) she had set off to Jacobshagen, though indeed the snow lay ankle-deep. However, she was well repaid, and had heard all she wanted; oh, there was great news!

Illa.—"Quick! what? how? why? Remember it is for the honour and reputation of the entire convent."

Hæc.—"She had first gone to one person, who pretended not to know anything at all of the matter, but then another person had told her the whole story; under the seal of the strictest secrecy, however."

Illa.—"What is it? what is it? How she went on chattering of nothing."

Hæc.—"But will the dear sister promise not to breathe it to mortal? She would be ruined with her best friend otherwise."

Illa.—"Nonsense, girl; who could I repeat it to? Come, out with it!"

So Anna began, in a very long-winded manner, to explain how the burgomaster's wife in Jacobshagen, said that her maid said that Provost Bamberg's maid said, that while she was sweeping his study the other morning, she heard the provost's sister say to her brother in the adjoining room, that she could not bear the chaplain David Ludeck, for he had been visiting there off and on for ever so long, and yet never had asked her the question, He was a faint-hearted coward evidently, and she hated faint-hearted men.

Sidonia grew as red as a fire-beacon when she heard this, and walked up and down the apartment as if much perturbed, so that Anna asked if the dear sister were ill? "No"—was the answer. "She was only thinking how best

to get rid of this priest, and prevent him running in and out of the convent whenever he pleased. She must try and have an order issued, that he was only to visit the nuns when they were sick. This very day she would see about it. Could the good Anna tell her what the sheriff had for lunch to-day?"

Illa.—"Ay, truly, could she; for the milk-girl who had brought her some fresh milk, told her that he had got plenty of wild fowl, which the keeper had snared in the net; and there was to be a sweet-bread besides. But what was the dear sister herself to eat?"

Hæc.—"No matter—but did she not hear a great ringing of bells? What could the ringing be for?"

Illa.—"That was a strange thing, truly. And there was no one dead, nor any child to be christened, that she had heard of. She would just run out and see, and bring the dear sister word."

Illa.—"Well then, wait till evening, for it is near noon now, and I expect a guest to lunch."

Hæc.—"Eh? a guest!—and who could it be?"

Illa.—"Why the chaplain himself. I want to arrange about his dismissal."

So, hardly had she got rid of the chatter-box, when Sidonia called the porter Matthias, and bid him greet the reverend chaplain from her, and say, that as she had somewhat to ask him concerning the investiture on Sunday, would he be her guest that day at dinner? She hoped to have some game, with a sweet-bread, and excellent beer to set before him.

When the porter returned with the answer from his Reverence, accepting the invitation, she sent him straight to the sheriff with a couple of covered dishes, and a message, begging his Worship to send her half-a-dozen brace or so of game, for she heard that a great many had been taken in his nets; and a sweet-bread, if he had it, for she had a guest to-day at dinner.

So the dishes came back full. Everything just ready to be served; for the cunning hag knew well that he dare not refuse her, and immediately afterwards the priest arrived to dinner. He was very friendly, but Sidonia caught him

looking very suspiciously at a couple of brooms, which she had laid crosswise under the table. So she observed: "I lay these brooms there, to preserve our dear mother and the sheriff from falling again into this sickness. It is part of the doctrine of sympathies, and I learned it out of my Herbal, as I can show you." Upon which she went to her trunk and got the book for the priest, whose fears diminished when he saw that it was *printed*, but he could not prevail on her to lend it to him.

Samma.—The priest grew still more friendly over the good eating and drinking; and she, the old hypocrite, discoursed him the while about her heavenly bridegroom, and threw up her eyes and sighed, at the same time pressing his hand fervently. But the priest never minded it, for she was old enough to be his mother, and besides, he remembered the Scripture: "No man can call Jesus Lord, except through the Holy Ghost." So as her every third word was "Jesus," he looked upon her as a most discreet and pious Christian, and went away much satisfied by her and the good dinner.

CHAPTER III.

SIDONIA TRIES ANOTHER WAY TO CATCH THE PRIEST, BUT FAILS THROUGH A MISTAKE.—ITEM; OF HER HORRIBLE SPELL, WHEREBY SHE BEWITCHED THE WHOLE PRINCELY RACE OF POMERANIA, SO THAT TO THE GRIEVOUS SORROW OF THEIR FATHERLAND, THEY REMAIN BARREN EVEN UNTO THIS DAY.*

As soon as the pious abbess was able to leave her bed, she sent for the priest, for she had strange suspicions about Sidonia, and asked the reverend clerk, if indeed her cure could have been effected by sympathy? and were it not rather some work of the bodily Satan himself? But my priest assured her concerning Sidonia's Christian faith; item, told, to the great wonderment of the abbess, that she no longer cared for the sub-prioret (we know why—she would

* Note of Duke Bogislaw XIV.—"Ay, and will to the last day, *each mihi.*"

sooner have the priest than the prioret), but was content to let Dorothea Stettin keep it or resign it, just as she pleased.

After this, the investiture of Sidonia took place, and the priest blessed her at the altar, and admonished her to take as her model the wise virgins mentioned Matt. xxv. (but God knows, she had followed the foolish virgins up to that period, and never ceased doing so to the end of her days).

Even on that very night, we shall see her conduct; for she bid her maid Wolde run and call up the convent porter, and dispatch him instantly for the priest, saying that she was very ill, and he must come and pray with her. This excited no suspicion, since she herself had forbade the priest entering the convent, unless any of the sisters were sick. But Anna Apenborg slipped out of bed when she heard the noise, and watched from the windows for the porter's return. Then she tossed up the window, though the snow blew in all over her bed, and called out: "Well, what says he? will he come? will he come?"

And when the fellow grunted in answer, "Yes, he's coming," she wrapped a garment round her, and set herself to watch, though her teeth were chattering from cold all the time. In due time the priest came, whereupon the curious virgin crept out of her garret, and down the stairs to a little window in the passage which looked in upon the refectory, and through which, in former times, provisions were sometimes handed in. There she could hear everything that passed.

When the priest entered, Sidonia stretched out her meagre arms towards him, and thanked him for coming; would he sit down here on the bed, for there was no other seat in the room? she had much to tell him that was truly wonderful. But the priest remained standing: let her speak on.

Illa.—"Ah! it concerned himself. She had dreamt a strange dream (God be thanked that it was not a reality), but it left her no peace. Three times she awoke, and three fell asleep and dreamt it again. At last she sent for him, for there might be danger in store for him, and she would *turn it away if possible.*"

Hic.—“It was strange, truly. What then had she dreamed?”

Illa.—“It seemed to her that murderers had got up into his room through the window, and just as they were on the point of strangling him, she had appeared and put them to flight, whereupon”—— (here she paused and sighed).

Hic. (In great agitation).—“Go on, for God’s sake go on—what further?”

Illa.—“Whereupon—ah! she must tell him now, since he forced her to do it. Whereupon, out of gratitude, he took her to be his wife, and they were married” (sighing, and holding both hands before her eyes).

Hic. (Clasping his hands).—“Merciful Heaven! how strange! I dreamt all that precisely myself.”*

Upon which Sidonia cried out: “How can it be possible? Oh, it is the will of God, David—it is the will of God” (and she seized him by both hands).

But the priest remained as cold as the snow outside, drew back his head and said: “Ah! no doubt these absurdities about marriage came into my head, because I had been thinking so much over our young Lord Philip of Wolgast, who was wedded to-day at Berlin.”

Sidonia started up at this, and screamed in rage and anger: “What! Duke Philip married to-day in Berlin? The accursed prioress told me the wedding was not to be for eight days after the next new moon.”

The priest now was more astonished at her manner than even at the coincidence of the dreams, and he started back

* The power of producing particular dreams by volition, was recognised by the ancients and philosophers of the middle ages. *Ex.* Albertus Magnus relates (*de mirabilibus mundi* 205) that horrible dreams can be produced by placing an ape’s skin under the pillow. He also gives a receipt for making women tell their secrets in sleep (but this I shall keep to myself), such phenomena are neither physiologically nor psychologically impossible, but our modern physiologists are content to take the mere poor form of nature, dissect it, anatomize it, and then bury it beneath the sand of their hypothesis. Thus, indeed, “the dead bury their dead,” while all the strange, mysterious, inner powers of nature, which the philosophers of the middle ages, as Psellus, Albertus Magnus, Trithemius, Cardanus, Theophrastus, &c. did so much to elucidate, are at once flippantly and ignorantly placed in the category of “Superstitions,” “Absurdities,” and “Artful Deceits.”

from the bed. Whereupon, perceiving the mistake she had made, the horrible witch threw herself down again, and letting her head fall upon the pillow, murmured: "Oh! my head! my head! She must have locked up the moon in the cellar. How will the poor people see now by night?—why did the prioress lock up the moon? Oh! my head! my head!" Then she thanked the priest for coming—it was so good of him; but she was worse—much worse. "Ah! her head! her head! Better go now—but let him come again in the morning to see her." So the good priest believed in truth that the detestable hag was very ill, and evidently suffering from fever; so he went his way pitying her much, and without the least suspicion of her wicked purposes.

Scarcely, however, had he closed the door, when Sidonia sprang like a cat from her bed, and called out—"Wolde, Wolde!" And as the old witch hobbled in with her lame leg, Sidonia raged and stamped, crying out: "The accursed abbess has lied to me. Ernest Ludovicus' brat was married to-day at Berlin. Oh! if I am too late now, as on his father's marriage, I shall hang myself in the laundry. Where is Chim—the good-for-nothing spirit?—he should have seen to this." And she dragged him out and beat him, while he quaked like a hare.

Whereupon Wolde called out: "Bring the padlock from the trunk." The other answered: "What use now?—the bridal pair are long since wedded and asleep." To which the old witch replied: "No; it is twelve o'clock here, but in Berlin it wants a quarter to it yet. There is time. The Berlin brides never retire to their apartment till the clock strikes twelve. There is time still."

"Then," exclaimed Sidonia, "since the devil cannot tell me on what day they hold bridal, I will make an end now of the whole accursed griffin brood, in all its relationships, branch and root, now and for evermore, in Wolgast as in Stettin; be they destroyed and rooted out for ever and for ever. Then she took the padlock, and murmured some words over it, of which Anna Apenborg could only catch the names, Philip, Francis, George, Ulrich, Bogislaff, who were all sons to Duke Bogislaff XIII., and in truth died each one without leaving an heir. And, during the incantation,

the light trembled and burned dim upon the table, and the thing which she had beaten seemed to speak with a human voice, and the bells on the turret swung in the wind with a low sound, so that Anna fell on her knees from horror, and scarcely dared to breathe.

Then the accursed sorceress gave the padlock and key to Wolde, bidding her go forth by night and fling it into the sea, repeating the words:—

“ Hid deep in the sea
Let my dark spell be,
For ever, for ever!
To rise up never!”

Then Wolde asked, “ Had she forgotten Duke Casimir?” Whereat Sidonia laughed and said, “ The spell had long been on him.” And immediately after, Anna Apenborg beheld *three* shadows, in place of two, thrown upon the white wall opposite the little window. So she strengthened her heart to look in, and truly there was *another* form present now. And the three danced together, and chanted strange rhymes, while the shadows on the wall danced up and down likewise. Then a deep bass voice called out: “ Ha! there is Christian flesh here! Ha! there is Christian flesh!” Whereupon Anna, though nearly dead with fright, crept up to her garret on her knees, while loud laughter resounded behind her; and it seemed as if old pots were flung up the stairs after her.* For the rest of that night, she could not close her eyes.

Next morning, one can easily imagine with what eagerness she hurried to the abbess, to relate the past night’s horrible tale. Sidonia likewise is astir early, for by day-

* Note of Duke Bogislaff XIV.—Incredibile sane, et tamen verum. Cur, mi Deus?—[It seems impossible, and yet how true. Wherefore, my God?]

The spell by knotting the girdle is noticed by Virgil, 8th eclogue :

“ Necte tribus nodis ternos Amarylli colores;
Necte Amarylli modo, et Veneris dic vincula necto.”

[In three knots Amaryllis weaves three different colours;
Amaryllis knots and says: I knot the girdle of Venus].

The use of the padlock is not mentioned until the middle ages, when it seems to have been so much employed that severe ordinances were directed against its use.

break she despatched her old lame Wolde to the chaplain (the porter was not up yet) with a can of beer for his great trouble the night before, and trusted it would strengthen his heart. In this beer she had poured her detestable love-philtrum, to awaken a passion for herself in the breast of the Reverend David, but it turned out quite otherwise, and ended after the most ludicrous fashion, no doubt all owing to the malice of the spirit Chim, in revenge for the blows she had given him the night previous; for, behold, as soon as the priest had swallowed a right good draught of beer, he began to stare at the old hag and murmur; then he passed his hand over his eyes, and motioned her to remain. Again he looked at her—twice, thrice—put some silver into her hand, and at last spake: “Ah! Wolde, what a beautiful creature you are! Where have my eyes been, that I never discovered this before?”

The cunning hag saw now plainly what the drink had done, and which way the wind blew. So she sat herself down simpering, by the stove, and my priest crept up close beside her; he took her hand—“Ah! how fat and plump it was—such a beautiful hand.”

But the old hag drew it back, saying, “Let me go, Mr. David!” To which he answered: “Yes, go, my treasure! I love to see you walk! What an exquisite limp! How stupid are men now-a-days not to see all the beauty of a limp! Ah! Venus knew it well, and therefore chose Vulcan, for he too limped like my Wolde. Give me a kiss then, loveliest of women! Ah! what enchanting, snow-white hair, like the purest silver, has my treasure on her head.”

No wonder the old lame hag was tickled with the commendations, for, in all the sixty years of her life, she never had heard the like before. But she played the prude, and pushed away the priest with her hand, just as, by good fortune, a messenger from the abbess knocked at the door, with a request that the chaplain would come to the good mother without delay. So the old hag went away with the maid of the abbess, and the priest stopped to dress himself more decently.

But in some time the abbess, who was on the watch,

saw him striding past her door; so she opened the window and called out to know "Where was he going? Had he forgotten that she lived there?" To which he answered: "He must first visit Sidonia." At this the worthy matron stared at him in horror; but my priest went on; and as he cared more for the maid than the mistress now, ran at once into the kitchen, without waiting to see Sidonia in the refectory; and seizing hold of Wolde, whispered, "That she must give him the kiss now—she need not be such a prude, for he had no wife. And what beautiful hair! Never in his life had he seen such beautiful white hair!" But the old hag still resisted; and in the struggle a stool, on which lay a pot, was thrown down.

Sidonia rushed in at the noise; and behold—there was my priest holding Wolde by the hand. She nearly fainted at the sight. What was he doing with her maid? Then seizing a heavy log of wood, she began to lay it on Wolde's shoulders, who screamed and roared, while my priest slunk away ashamed, without a word; and as he ran down the steps, heard the blows and the screams still resounding from the kitchen.

As he passed the door of the abbess's room, again she called him in; but as he entered, she exclaimed in terror: "My God, what ails your Reverence? You look as black and red in the face as if you had had a fit, and had grown ten years older in one night!"

"Nothing ails me," he answered; then sighed, and walked up and down the room, murmuring: "What is the world to me? Why should I care what the world thinks?" Then falls flat on the ground as if he were dead, while the good abbess screams and calls for help. In runs Anna Apenborg—item, several other sisters with their maids, and they stretch the priest out upon a bench near the stove, where he soon begins to foam at the mouth, and throw up all the beer, with the love-philtrum therein, which he had drunk (Sidonia's power effected this, no doubt, since she saw how matters stood).

Then he heaved a deep sigh, opened his eyes, and asked, "Where am I?" Whereupon, finding that his reason and clear understanding had been restored to him, he requested

the sisterhood to depart (for they had all rushed in to hear what was going on) and leave him alone with the abbess, as he had matter of grave import to discuss with her. Whereupon they all went out, except Anna Apenborg, who said that she too had matter of grave import to relate. So finding she would not stir, the priest took her by the hand, and put her out at the door along with the others.

Now when they were both left alone, we can easily imagine the subject of their conversation. The poor priest made his confession, concealing nothing, only lamenting bitterly how he had disgraced his holy calling; but he had felt like one in a dream, or under some influence which he could not shake off. In return, the abbess told him of the horrible scene witnessed by Anna Apenborg the night before; upon which they both agreed that no more accursed witch and sorceress was in the world than their poor cloister held at that moment. Finally, putting all the circumstances together, the reverend David began to perceive what designs Sidonia had upon him, particularly when he heard of Anna Apenborg's visit to Jacobshagen, and the news which she had brought back from thence. So to destroy all hope at once in the accursed sorceress, and save himself from further importunity and persecution on her part, he resolved to offer his hand the very next day to Barbara Bamberg, for in truth he had long had an eye of Christian love upon the maiden, who was pious and discreet, and just suited to be a pastor's wife.

Then they agreed to send for the sheriff, and impart the whole matter to him, he being cloister superintendent; but his answer was: "Let them go to him, if they wanted to speak to him; for, as to him, he would never enter the convent again—his poor body had suffered too much there the last time."

Whereupon they went to him, but he could give no counsel, only to leave the matter in the hands of God the Lord: for if they appealed to the Prince, the sorceress would surely bewitch them again, and they would be screaming day and night, or may be die at once, and then what help for them, &c.

Sidonia, meanwhile, was not idle; for she sent messages

throughout the whole convent that she lay in her bed sick unto death, and they must needs come and pray with her, along with the priest, before they assembled in the chapel for service. At this open blasphemy and hypocrisy, a great fear and horror fell upon the abbess, likewise upon the priest, since the witch had specially named him, and desired that he would come *before* service to pray with her. For a long while he hesitated, at last promised to visit her *after* service; but again bethought himself that it would be more advisable to visit her before, for he might possibly succeed in unveiling all her iniquities, or if not, he could pray afterwards in the church, "that if indeed Sidonia were really sick, and a child of God, the just and merciful Father would raise her up and strengthen her in her weakness; but if she were practising deceit, and were no child of God, but an accursed limb of Satan, then he would give her up into the hands of God for punishment, for had he not said, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord?'" (Romans xii. 19.)

This pleased the abbess, and forthwith the reverend David proceeded to the refectory.

Now Sidonia had not expected him so early, and she was up and dressed, busily brewing another hellish drink to have ready for him by the time he arrived; but when his step sounded in the passage, she whipped into bed and covered herself up with the clothes, not so entirely, however, but that a long tail of her black robe fell outside from under the white sheet—this, unluckily for herself, she knew nothing of. The priest, however, saw it plainly, and had moreover heard the jump she gave into bed just as he opened the door; but he made no remark, only greeted her as usual, and asked what she wanted with him.

Ill.—"Ah! she was sick, sick unto death—would he not pray for her? for the night before she was too ill to pray, and no doubt the Lord was angry with her, by reason of the omission. This morning, indeed, she had crept out of bed, just to scold her awkward maid for breaking all the pots and pans, as he himself saw, but had to go to bed again, and was growing weaker and weaker every quarter of an hour. But the good priest must taste her beer, let his

drink a can of it first to strengthen his heart. It was the best beer she had made yet, and her maid had just tapped a fresh barrel."

Here the reverend David made answer: "He thanked her for her beer, but would drink none. He could not believe, either, that she was as ill as she said, and had been lying in bed all the morning."

But she persisted so vehemently in her falsehoods that the very boards under her must have felt ashamed, if they had possessed any consciousness. Whereupon the priest shuddered in horror and disgust, bent down silently, and lifted up the piece of her robe which lay outside.

"What did this mean? did she wear her nun's dress in bed? or was she not rather making a mock of him, and the whole convent, by her pretended sickness?"

Here Sidonia grew red with shame and wrath; but, ere she could utter a word, the priest continued with a holy and righteous anger:—

"Woe to thee, Sidonia! for thou art a by-word amongst the people. Woe to thee, Sidonia, for thou hast passed thy youth in wantonness and thy old age in sin. Woe to thee, Sidonia! for thy hellish arts brought thy mother the abbess, and thy father the superintendent, nearly to their graves. Woe to thee, Sidonia! for this past night thou hast taken a horrible revenge upon the whole princely race, and cursed them by the power which the devil gives thee. Woe to thee, Sidonia! for by thy hellish drink thou didst seek to destroy me, the servant of the living God, to thy horrible maid still more horribly attracting me. Woe to thee, Sidonia! accursed witch and sorceress, blasphemer of God and man! Behold thy God liveth and thy Prince liveth, and they will rain fire and brimstone upon thy infamous head. Woe to thee! woe to thee! woe to thee! thou false serpent—thou accursed above all the generations of vipers—how wilt thou escape eternal damnation?"

When the righteous priest of God had ended his fearful rebuke, he started at himself, for he knew not how the words had come into his mouth; then turned from the bed and while a peal of laughter followed him from the convent, he saw that no evil happened to him at that time, as he

had fully expected, from Sidonia (probably she feared to exasperate the convent and the Prince against her too much); but she treasured up her vengeance to another opportunity, as we shall hear further on.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW DOROTHEA STETTIN IS TALKED OUT OF THE SUB-PRIORET BY SIDONIA, AND THE PRIEST IS PROHIBITED FROM VISITING THE CONVENT.

IF Sidonia could not be the pastor's wife, she was determined at least to be sub-prioress, and commenced her preparations for this object by knitting a little pair of red hose for her cat. Then she sent for Dorothea Stettin, saying that she was weak and ill, and no one took pity on her.

When the good Dorothea came as she was asked, there lay my serpent on the bed in her nun's robes, groaning and moaning as if her last hour had come; and scarcely had the sub-prioress taken a seat near her, when my cat crept forth from under the bed, in his little red hose, mewing and rubbing himself up against the robe of the sub-prioress, as if praying her to remove this unwonted constraint from him, of the little red hose.

After Dorothea had inquired about her sickness, she looked at the cat, and asked wonderingly, what was the meaning of such a strange dress?

Illa.—“Ah, dear friend, it was dreadful to my feelings to see the little animal going about naked, therefore I knit little hose for him, as you see; indeed, I am often tempted to wonder how the Lord God could permit the poor animals to appear naked before us.”

Hæc.—(Extending her arms for joy, so that she almost tumbled back off the stool)—“Oh, God be praised and thanked, at last I have found one chaste soul in this wicked world! (sobs, throws up her eyes, falls upon Sidonia's neck, kisses her, and weeps over her) ah, yes, one chaste soul at last, like herself!”

Illa.—“True, Dorothea, there is no virtue so rare in this

evil world as chastity. Ah, why has the Lord God placed such things before our eyes? I never can comprehend it, and never will. What a sight for a chaste virgin these naked animals! What did the dear sister think on the matter!"

Hæc.—"Ah, she knew not what to think, had asked the priest about it."

Illa.—"And what did he say?"

Hæc.—"He laughed at her."

Illa.—"Just like him, the lewd hypocritical pharisee."

Hæc.—"Eh? she was too hard on the good priest. He was a pure and upright servant of God."

Illa.—"Ay, as Judas was. Had not sister Dorothea heard—"

Hæc.—"No, for God's sake what? the dear sister frightened her already."

Illa.—"First, you confess that the priest laughed when you talked about chastity?"

Hæc.—"Yes, true, ah, indeed true."

Illa.—"Then you remember that he preached a sermon lately upon adul— upon adul—. No, she never could utter the word—the horrible word. Upon the seventh commandment, to the great scandal of the entire convent?"

Hæc.—"Ah yes, ah yes, she was there, and had to stop one ear with her finger, the other with her kerchief, not to hear all the strange and dreadful things he was saying."

Illa.—"And yet this was the man that ran in and out of the cloister daily at his pleasure, sent for or not. A young unmarried man—though the convent rulers especially declared an *old* man—ah, if *she* were sub-prioress this scandal should never be permitted."

Hæc.—"What could be done? it was a blessed thing to live in peace. Besides, the priest was such a pious man."

Illa.—"Pious? Heaven defend us from such piety! Why, had she not heard?—the whole convent talked about it."

Hæc.—"No, no, for God's sake, what had happened? tell her—she had been making sausages all the morning, and had heard nothing."

Illa.—“Then know, ah God, how it pained her to talk of it—she had heard a great noise in the kitchen in the morning, as if all the pots and pans were tumbled about, and when she ran in to see—there was the priest—oh, her chaste eyes never had seen such a sight; the *pious* priest making love to her old maid Wolde.”

Hæc.—“Impossible, impossible!—to her old maid Wolde?”

Illa.—“Yea, and he was praying her for kisses, and praising her fat hand, and extolling her white hair. But as to what more she had seen—”

Hæc.—“For God’s sake, sister, what more?”

Illa.—(Sighing, and covering her face with both hands.) “No, no, that she could never bring her chaste lips to utter. Oh, that such wickedness should be in the world (weeping bitterly). But she would never enter the chapel again, and that priest there; nor receive the rites from him. But this was not all, the dear sister must hear how he revenged himself upon her, because she interrupted his toying with the old hag. It was truth, all truth! she (Sidonia) grew so ill with fright and horror that she was unable to disrobe, and threw herself on the bed just as she was, but growing weaker and weaker hour by hour sent for the priest at last, to pray with her, and afterwards to offer up general supplication for her restoration, in the chapel with all the sisterhood, but only think, the shameless hypocrite refused to pray with her, because he spied an end of her black robe out of the bed, declaring she was not ill at all, that she was a base liar, all because she had lain down in her convent dress, and finally went his way cursing and swearing, without even saying one prayer, or uttering one word of comfort, as was his duty. And now, alas! she must die without priest or sacrament! To what a Sodom and Gomorrah she had come! But if an old hag like her maid was not safe from the shameless parson, how could she or any of them be safe? What was to be done? unless the dear sister, as sub-prioress, took the matter in her own hands, and brought him to task about it?”

At this proposal the other trembled like an aspen leaf, and seemed more dead than alive. She wept, wrung her

hands, for God's sake what could she do? how could she talk on such a matter? Let the abbess see to it, if she chose.

Illa.—“Stuff, the old pussy—the less said of *her* the better. Why she was worse than the old maid, Wolde herself.”

Hæc.—“The abbess? why the whole convent, and the whole world too, talked of her piety and virtue.”

Illa.—“Very virtuous, truly, to have the priest locked up with her, and when some of the sisters wished to remain, suspecting that all was not right, the priest pushed them out at the door with his own hands, and bolted it after them, as many could testify to her had been done this very day. Oh, what a Sodom and Gomorrah she had been betrayed into! (weeping, sobbing, and falling upon Dorothea's neck) I pray you, sister, for the sake of our heavenly bridegroom, bring this evil to an end, otherwise fire and brimstone will assuredly and justly be rained down upon our poor cloister.”

Still the other maintained, that the dear sister must err as regarded the abbess. It might be her chaste zeal that blinded her. True enough, probably, what she said of the priest; but the worthy abbess—no, never could she believe that.”

Illa.—“Let her have proof then. It was not her custom to weaken innocence; call her maid Wolde.”

Then as Wolde entered, Sidonia made a sign, and bid her tell the sub-prioress all that the shameless priest had done.

Ancilla.—“He had asked her for little kisses, praised her hands and hair, and her beautiful limp, and had sat up close to her on the bench, then run after her into the kitchen, gave her money (shows the money), asked again for kisses, then—”

Sidonia screams—

“Hold your tongue; no more, no more; enough, enough!”

At this story, Dorothea Stettin nearly went into convulsions, she wrung her hands, crying—

“How is it possible? Oh, heaven, how is it possible?”

Illa.—“There is something more quite possible also; the hag shall tell you what she saw at the room door of the abbess.”

Ancilla.—“When the scandalous priest left her, he went straight to the abbess, and there was taken with cramps, as she heard, upon which all the convent ran thither, and she with the rest. And he was lying stretched out on a bench, like one dead, no doubt from shame; but the shame soon went off, and then he got up, and bade them all leave the room. However, good Anna Apenborg did not choose to go, for she suspected evil. Whereupon he seized her by the hand, and put her out along with the others. She saw all this herself, for she was standing in the passage, waiting to speak to sister Anna. When, behold, she was pushed out to her great surprise in this way by the priest, and they heard the door bolted inside immediately after.”

At this Dorothea Stettin fell upon Sidonia's bed, weeping, sobbing, and ready to die with grief; but Sidonia bade her not take on so; for perhaps, after all, the old hag had not told the truth, at least concerning the dear worthy abbess; but two witnesses would be sufficient testimony. Whereupon she bid Wolde watch for Anna Apenborg from the window, and beckon to her to come in if she saw her going by.

And scarcely had Wolde stepped to the window, when she laughed and said—

“Truly, there stands Anna chatting with Agnes Kleist's maid at the well. Shall I run and call her?”

“Yes,” said Sidonia.

In a little while Wolde returned with sister Anna. The girl looked wildly round at first, stared at the broom-sticks which lay crosswise under the table, and then asked, with a trembling voice, what the good sister wanted with her, while she took a seat on a trunk near the bed.

“My old maid,” said Sidonia, “tells me that the reverend chaplain took you by the hand, and put you out of the abbess's room, after which he bolted the door. Is this true or not? Speak the whole truth.”

So Anna related the whole story as Wolde had done; but, while talking, the curious damsel lifted up a corner of

the quilt to peep under the bed, upon which my cat in his little red hose crept forth again, mewing and rubbing himself against Anna, at which she gave a shriek of horror and sprang out of the room, down the steps and into the courtyard, without ever once venturing to look behind her. And many think that this cat was Sidonia's evil spirit Chim. But Anna Apenborg saw afterwards a pair of terrible fiery eyes glaring at her from Sidonia's window; so others said, that must have been Chim. But we shall hear more of this same cat presently.

Summa.—Sidonia knew well enough what made the girl scream, but she turned to Dorothea, and said—

“Ah, see how this wickedness has shocked the poor young nun! Therefore, dear sister, you must, as sub-prioress, make an end of the scandal, and prohibit this false priest from visiting the convent; for, indeed, they who permitted him such freedom amongst the nuns were more to blame for his sins than he himself.”

Poor Dorothea groaned forth in answer—

“Alas, alas! why did I ever accept the sub-prioret? For the couple of sacks of flour, and the bit of corn which she got more than the others, it was not worth while to be plagued to death. It was all true about the priest. He must be dismissed. But then she loved peace. How could she right such matters? Oh, that some one would relieve her of this sub-prioret!”

Illa.—“That can be easily done if you will. Suppose you ask Anna Apenborg to take it?”

Hæc.—“No, no; Anna had not sense enough for that; but if the dear sister herself would take it, how happy she would feel.”

Illa.—“She was too sick, probably going to die; who could tell?”

Hæc.—“No, no; she would pray for her. The dear sister could not be spared yet. Let her say, yes (falling on her neck and weeping), only let her say, yes.”

Illa.—“Well, out of love to her she would say, yes; and if the Lord raised her up from this sick bed, order and decorum should reign again in the convent.”

Hæc.—Again embracing her with gratitude. “No doubt

they would. She knew well that no such pure-minded nun was in the convent as her dear sister Sidonia."

Illa.—"But, good Dorothea, in order to get rid of the priest as soon as possible, we had better send the porter immediately to summon the abbess and the entire sisterhood here, for you to tender your resignation in their presence."

Hæc.—"But sister Sidonia must promise not to complain of the priest or the abbess to the Prince."

Illa.—"No, no; I can settle the matter quietly, without laying a complaint before the Prince."

Hæc.—"All right, then. Everything, if possible, in peace."

Hereupon Sidonia despatched the porter to the abbess, with a request that she and the whole convent would assemble in half an hour at the refectory, as she had somewhat to communicate. Meanwhile she instructed Dorothea in what she was to say, so as not to disgrace the poor abbess before the whole convent.

At the end of the half hour, the abbess and the entire sisterhood appeared, but all with anger and mistrust depicted on their countenances. Sidonia then spake—

"Since ye and your priest refused to pray for me, I have prayed for myself, and the Lord hath heard me in my weakness, and made me strong enough to listen to the request of this good sister, Dorothea, and promise to fulfil it. Speak, sister Dorothea, what was your prayer?"

So Dorothea advanced, weeping and wringing her hands—

"Ah, God! she could no longer be sub-prioress. She loved peace too much. But there were bad doings in the convent—she would say no more—only they must end. Therefore she had earnestly prayed her dear sister Sidonia to relieve her from the duties of office, and become sub-prioress in her stead."

Here she loosed the veil, which differed from the others, by having a key embroidered in gold thereon—the abbess had two keys on her veil—and bound it on Sidonia, who had by this time risen from bed, taking Sidonia's veil for herself. Then leading the fatal sorceress forward, she said—

"Good mother and dear sisters—behold your sub-prioress!"

Thereupon the abbess and the whole convent remained quite mute, so great was their horror.

Then Sidonia asked—

"Have they ought to say against it? If so, let them speak."

But they all remained silent and trembling, till at last the abbess murmured—

"Is this done with your free-will, Dorothea?"

"Ah, yes, yes, truly," she answered. "I told you before with what earnest prayers I besought the dear sister to release me. God be thanked she has consented at last. Who can keep order and decorum so well throughout the convent?"

Then the abbess spoke again—

"Sister Sidonia, I have no opposition to make, as you know full well. So, if the Prince, and the sheriff, our worthy superintendent, consent, you shall be sub-prioress. Yet first you must render an account of your strange doings this past night, for things were seen and heard in your chamber, which could not have been accomplished without the help of the great enemy himself."

Hereat Sidonia laughed as if she would die. She would tell them the whole trick. They all knew what a trouble to the convent was this Anna Apenborg from her curiosity—not once or twice, but ten times a day running in and out with her chat and gossip. She had tried all means to prevent her, but in vain. Even in the middle of her prayers, the said Anna would come in to tell her what one sister was cooking, and another getting, or some follies even quite unfit for chaste ears. And that last night being very sick, she sent for the priest, upon which she heard Anna calling out from the window to the porter,—“Will he come? will he come?” Item; she had then crept down to listen at the door. So after the priest went, notwithstanding all her weakness, she (Sidonia) determined to give her a good fright, and thus prevent her from spying and listening any more. Then she called Wolde, and bid her dance, while she *muttered some words out of the cookery-book.* But here

Anna called out: "It is not true; there were *three* danced. Where is the carl with the deep bass voice? Who could this be at that midnight hour, but the devil bodily himself?"

At this, Sidonia laughed louder than before. It was her cat—her own cat, who was springing about the room, because for divers reasons she had put little red hose on him. On this she stoops under the bed, seizes my cat by the leg, who howls (that was the deep bass voice) and flings him into the middle of the room, where all the nuns, when they beheld his strange jump and springs in the little hose, burst out into loud laughter, in which the abbess herself could not refrain from joining. So as there was no evidence against Sidonia, and Anna Apenborg was truly held of all as a most troublesome chatter-box and spy, the inquiry ended. And with somewhat more friendliness, putting the best face on a bad matter, they accepted Sidonia for their sub-prioress.

CHAPTER V.

HOW SIDONIA WOUNDS AMEROSIA VON GUNTERSBERG WITH AN AXE, BECAUSE SHE PURPOSED TO MARRY.—AND PRAYS THE CONVENT PORTER, MATTHIAS WINTERFELD, TO DEATH.—FOR THESE, AND OTHER CAUSES, THE REVEREND CHAPLAIN REFUSES TO SHRIVE THE SORCERESS, AND DENOUNCES HER PUBLICLY FROM THE ALTAR.

SIDONIA's first act, as may easily be imagined, was to dismiss the priest; and for this purpose she wrote him a letter, saying that he must never more presume to set foot within the cloister, for if old ice-grey mothers were not safe from him, how could she and the other maidens hope to escape? If he disobeyed her orders she would summon him before the princely consistorium, where strange things might be told of him.

So the Reverend David consented right willingly, and never saw the nuns except on Sundays in the chapel, but Sidonia herself never appeared in the nuns' choir. She gave Dorothea many excellent and convincing reasons for

her absence. (But in my opinion, it was caused by hate and abhorrence of the sacrament, and the holy word of God; for such are a torment and a torture to the children of the devil, even as the works of the devil are an abomination to the children of God.)

When, however, the report came, that the Reverend David was indeed betrothed to Barbara Bamberg, Sidonia presented herself once in the choir, kneeled down, and was heard to murmur: "Wed if thou wilt, that I cannot hinder; but a child thou shalt never hold at the font!" And truly was the evil curse fulfilled.

Meanwhile the fear and the dread of her increased daily in the convent, for besides old Wolde, two other horrible hags were observed frequently going in and out of her apartments—true children of Satan, as one might see by their red glowing eyes. With these she practised many horrible sorceries, sometimes quarrelled with them, however, and beat them out with the broom-stick, but they always came back again, and were as well received as ever.

Then she had strifes and disputes with every one who approached her, and was notorious through all the courts of justice for her wrangling and fighting, in particular with her brother's son, Otto of Stramehl, for she sued him for an *alimentum* pension, and also demanded that the rents of her two farm-houses in Zachow should be paid her, according to the sum to which they must have accumulated during the last fifty years. But he answered, she should have no money, why did she not live at her farm-houses? He knew nothing of the rents, the whole matter was past and forgotten, and she had no claim now on him, and so every month she wrangled in the courts about this business. Item; she fought with Preslar of Buslar, because being a feudal vassal of the Borks', she required him to kiss her hand, which he refused; then her dog having strayed into his house, she accused him of having stolen it. Item; she fought with the maid who acted as cook in the convent kitchen, and said she never got a morsel fit to eat. And the said maid (I forget her name now) having salted the fish too much one day, she ran after her with a broom-stick—once, indeed, beat her so severely, that she was lame her life long after.

But worse than the fish-salting was the white kerchief which the maid wore. For people, she said, might take her at a distance to be one of the honourable convent ladies, therefore she must wear a coloured one. This the maid would not do, so she was soon brought to an untimely end also, along with all others who displeased her.

These things, and many more, came out upon her trial, but for divers reasons I must pass them over. All her notes, messages, and letters, she intrusted to the porter Matthias Winterfeld, who was often sent, maybe, five times a week by her to Stargard. But he dared not remonstrate, or she would have struck him with the broom-stick.

However all this is nothing in comparison with the way she treated the unfortunate nuns. The younger and prettier they were, so much the more she boxed, beat, and martyred them, even striking them with the broom-stick. And if they ever smiled or seemed happy talking to one another, she abused and reviled them, calling them idle wantons, who thought of nothing but matrimony. None were permitted outside the convent gates, not even to visit their parents: they should not be flying back with their crumbs of gossip about brides and weddings forsooth, and such like improper thoughts. Neither should they go to the annual fair. She would go herself and buy everything for them she thought needful, only let them give her the gold.

And out of deadly fear the poor maidens bore this tyranny long while silently; even the abbess feared to complain, so that Sidonia soon usurped the entire government of the convent.

But the powder-mill broke out at last into vivid flames, as I shall narrate here. It was on this wise:—Amongst the novices was one beautiful young maiden, Ambrosia von Guntersberg by name. She was fifth daughter of old Ambrosius of Falkenwald, a little town near Jacobshagen. One day a young nobleman called Ewald von Mellenthin beheld her in her cloister habit. Think you he forgot her? No, he can never forget the maiden! One, two weeks pass over, but she has sunk deeper and deeper into his heart; at last he rose up and went to Falkenwald to her father, Ambrosius, asking her hand in honourable marriage.

Now the old man was well pleased, for he was poor, and had five daughters; so he bid the young noble write a letter to his daughter Ambrosia, which he would inclose in one from himself to her. But no answer arrived from the maiden (we may guess why, for Sidonia opened and read all the letters that came to the convent, before they were handed to their owners. Those that displeased her she burned; no doubt, therefore, the love-letter was the first in the flames.) But the young noble grew impatient for an answer, and resolved to ride to Marienfliess. So he ties his good horse to a cross in the churchyard, walks straight up to the convent, and rings the bell. Immediately the old porter, Matthias, opened to him, with his hands covered with blood (for he was killing a fat ox for the nuns, close by); whereupon the noble lord prayed to speak a few words to the young novice, Ambrosia von Guntersberg, at the grating; and in a little time the beautiful maiden appeared, tripping along the convent court (but Sidonia is before her). Ambrosia advanced modestly to the grating, and asked the handsome knight, "What was his pleasure?" who answered, "Since I beheld you in Guntersberg, dearest lady, my heart has been wholly yours; and when I saw how diligently and cheerfully you ruled your father's house during his sickness, I resolved to take you for my wife, if such were possible; for I need a good and prudent spouse at my castle of Lienke, and methinks no better or more beautiful could be found than yourself. Therefore I obtained your father's permission to open the matter to you in writing, and he inclosed my letter in one of his own, but you have neither answered one nor the other. Whereupon, in my impatience I saddled my good horse, and rode over here to have an answer at once from your own beautiful lips."

When Sidonia heard this, she grew black in the face with rage: "What! in her presence, before her very face, to dare to hold such language to a young maiden—a mere child—who knew nothing at all of what marriage meant. He must pack off this instant, or the devil himself should turn him out of the cloister."

Meanwhile the young maiden took heart (for the handsome knight pleased her) and said:—"Gracious Lady

Prioress (Sidonia made them all call her Gracious Lady, as if she were a born princess), I am no more a child, as you say, and I know very well what marriage means."

This boldness made the other so wroth that she screamed—"Wait! I will teach you what marriage is;" and she sprang on her to box her. But Ambrosia rushed through the side-door out into the court, Sidonia following; however, not being able to reach her, she seized up the axe with which the porter had been killing the ox, and flung it after her, wounding the poor maiden so in the foot that the red blood poured down over her white stockings, while the young lover, who could not break the grating, screamed and stamped for rage and despair. By the good mercy of God the wound was only slight, still the fair novice fell to the ground; but seeing Sidonia rushing at her again with the large butcher's knife, which the porter had been using, she sprang up and ran to the grating, crying out to the noble, "Save me! save me!"

And at her screams all the nuns threw up their windows, right and left, over the court-yard; but finding the young knight could not help her, she ran to the old porter, still screaming, "Save me! save me! she is going to murder me!"

Now the fellow was glad enough to be revenged on Sidonia, for she had sent him running to Stargard for her late the night before, and the moment the ox was to be quartered he was to be off there again at her command; so he rushed at the vile witch, and seizing her up like a bundle of old rags, pitched her against the wall with all his force, adding a right hearty curse; and there she lay quaking like an old cat, while the handsome young noble laughed loud from the grating.

But she was up again soon, shook her dry withered fist at the porter, and cried: "Ha! thou insolent churl, I will pray thee to death for this!"

Whereupon she went off to her room, and locked herself up there, while the fair Ambrosia ran to the grating, and stretching out her little hands through the bars, exclaimed, "I am yours, dear knight; oh, take me away from this horrible hell!"

This rejoiced my young noble heartily, and he kissed the little hands and lamented over her foot; "And was it much hurt? She must lift it up, and show him if the wound was deep."

So she raised up the dainty foot a little bit, and then saw that her whole shoe was full of blood; but the old porter, who came by just then, comforted the handsome youth, and told him he would stop the blood directly, for the wound was but a trifle. Whereupon he laid a couple of straws over it, murmured some words, and behold, in a moment, the blood is stanch'd! Then the fair novice thanked him courteously, and prayed him to unlock the wicket, for she would go and stay a couple of hours with the miller's wife, while this young noble, to whom she had plighted love and troth, returned to her father's for a carriage to bring her home. After what had passed now, never more would she enter the cloister."

But what happened? Scarcely had the good old porter unfastened the grating, and the young knight taken the fair girl in his arms, kissing her and pressing her to his heart (well Sidonia did not see him), when Matthias screamed out, "My God, what ails me?" and fell flat on the ground. At this the young knight left his bride, and flew to raise him up. "What could ail him?" But the poor old man can hardly speak, his eyes are turned in his head, and he gasped—"It was as if a man were sitting inside his breast, and crushing him to death. Oh, he could not breathe—his ribs were breaking."

The alarmed young noble then helped the poor creature to reach his room, which lay close by the wicket; and having laid him on the bed in care of his wife, and recommended him to the mercy of God, he returned to his own fair bride, to carry her off from this murder-hole, and place her in safety with the miller's wife. I may as well mention here that he and the beautiful Ambrosia were wedded in due time, and lived long in peace and happiness, blessed with many lovely children, for all the evil which Sidonia tried to bring upon them, as we shall hear, came to nought, through the mercy of the great God.

But to return to the porter—on the third day he died;

and during that time, day and night, Sidonia prayed, and was never seen but once. This was at the dividing of the salmon, when she threw up her window, and shaking her withered clenched hand at them, and her long white locks, threatened the nuns on their peril to touch the tail-piece—the tail-piece was hers.

A general horror pervaded the convent now, in truth, when the death of the porter was known. Anna Apenborg shut herself up, trembling, in her cell, and even good Dorothea began somewhat to doubt the virtues of the vile sorceress; for the corpse had a strange and unnatural appearance, so that it was horrible to look upon, by which signs it was easy to perceive that he had been prayed to death, as the fearful night-hag had threatened.

I must notify these symptoms, for the corpses of many of Sidonia's victims presented the same appearances as the corpse of the reverend David—item, Joachim Wedeln of Cremzow—item, Doctor Schwalenberg of Stargard, and Duke Philip II. and lastly the abbess, Magdalena von Petersdorf. Whether her brother's son, Otto of Stramehl, whom she was suspected also of having prayed to death, presented the like, I cannot say with certainty. At this same time, also, his Princely Grace, Duke Bogislaff XIII. expired, many say bewitched to death; but of this I have no proof, as the body had quite a natural aspect after death. Still he had just arranged to journey to Marienfließ himself, and turn out Sidonia, in consequence of the accusations of sheriff Sparling and the convent chaplain, so that his sudden death looks suspicious; however, as the medicus, Dr. Nicolaus Schulz, pronounced: "*quod ex ramis venæ portæ Epatis et lienis exporrectis, iste adustus sanguis eo prosiliisset*" (for he died by throwing up a black matter like his brothers); and further, as the manikin on the three-legged hare did not appear this time at the castle, I shall not lay the murder on Sidonia, to increase her terrible burden at the last day, though I have my own thoughts upon the matter.

Summa.—My gracious Prince died *suddenly*. Alas, woe! exactly like all his brothers; he was just sixty-one years old, seven months and fifteen days, and a more god-

fearing prince never sat on a throne. But my grief over the fate of this great Pomeranian house, has carried me away from the corpse of the old porter. The appearances were these:—

1. The face brown, green, and yellow; particularly about the *musculi frontales et temporales*.

2. The *musculi pectorales* so swelled, and the *cartilago ensiformis* so singularly raised, that the chest of the corpse touched the mouth.

3. From the *patella* of the left leg to the *malleolus externus* of the foot, all brown, green, and yellow, blended together."

And on examination of the said corpse, Dr. Kukuck of Stargard, affirmed and was ready to swear, that no one tittle of the signature of Satan was wanting thereupon.

Summa.—The poor carl was buried with great mourning on the following Friday; and the Reverend David preached a sermon thereupon, in which he plainly spoke of his strange and unnatural death, so that every one knew well whom he suspected. My hag heard of this instantly, and therefore determined to attend the sacrament on the following Sunday; for this end she despatched Wolde to the priest, bidding her tell him she had a great desire to attend the holy rite, and would go to confession that day after noon. At this horrid blasphemy a cold shudder fell upon the priest (and I trust every Christian man will feel the like as he reads this), for he now saw through her motive clearly, how she wanted to blind the eyes of the people as to the death of the porter, by this mockery of the holiest rites of religion. Besides, amongst the horrible abominations practised by witches, it is well known that having received the sacred bread, they privately take the same again from their mouth and feed their familiar therewith. And one day when the convent was quite still, Anna Apenborg having crept down to peep through the key-hole of the refectory door, saw enough to confirm this general belief.

No wonder then if the good priest stood long silent from horror; then he spake: "Tell the prioress it is well;" but when Wolde was gone he threw himself upon his knees in

his closet before God, and wrestled long in prayer, with tears and wringing of hands, that he would open to him what was his path of duty.

About noon he became more composed, through the great mercy of the Lord; and bid his wife Barbara come to him, with whom he had lived now a year and a-half in perfect joy, though without children. To her he disclosed the proposition of the horrible sorceress, and afterwards spake thus:—

“And because, dear Barbara, after earnest prayer to God, I have come to the resolution neither to shrive, nor to give the Lord’s body to this daughter accursed of hell, do not be surprised if a like death awaits me as happened to the porter Matthias. When I die, therefore, dear wife, take thee another spouse and bear children. ‘For the woman,’ says the Scripture, ‘shall be blessed through child-bearing, so as she continues in faith, and love, and in holiness with sobriety.’—1 Timothy ii. Thus thou wilt soon forget me.”

But the poor wife wept, and besought him to turn from his resolve, and not incur the vengeance of Sidonia. So he answered—“Weep not, or our parting will be more bitter; this poor flesh and blood is weak enough, still never will I blaspheme the holy rite of our church, and cast pearls before swine.”—Matt. vii. And wherefore weep? At the last day they would meet again, to smile for ever in an eternity of joy. But could he hope for this if he were an unfaithful steward of the mysteries of God? No; but it was written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory; death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? God be thanked who giveth us the victory through Christ our Lord.’—1 Cor. xv. In God therefore he trusted, and in his strength would go now to the confessional.”

She must let him go; the sexton would soon ring the bell, and he wished to pray some time alone in the church. Her tears had again disturbed his spirit, and made him weak. But he would use the holy keys of his office, which his Saviour had entrusted to him, to his glory alone, even if this accursed sorceress were to bring him to the grave for it. If the Lord will, he could protect him, but he would

still do his duty. Will she not let him go now, that he may pray?"

And when she unwound her arms, he took her again in his, kissed her, sobbed, and wept; then tearing himself away, went out into the church by the garden entrance.

Then the poor wife flung herself on a seat, weeping and praying, but in a little while in came Dorothea Stettin, saying: "That she was going to confession, and had no small silver for the offertory. Could she give her change of a dollar?"

Then she asked about the other's grief; and having heard the cause, promised to go to the priest herself, and beseech him not to break the staff "Woe" over Sidonia. She went therefore instantly to the church, and found him on his knees praying behind the altar. Whereupon she entreated him, after her fashion, not to break the blessed peace—peace above all things.

Meanwhile, the sexton rung the bell, and Sidonia entered; sweeping the nave of the church to the altar, followed by seven or eight nuns. But when she beheld Dorothea come out at one side, and the priest at the other, and that not another soul had been in the church, she laughed aloud mockingly, and clapped her hands: "Ha! the pious priest, would he tell them now what he and Dorothea were doing behind the altar?" The sisters were all witnesses how this shameless parson conducted himself. Though she spoke this quite loud for every one to hear, yet not one of the nuns made answer, but stood trembling like doves who see the falcon ready to pounce upon them. Yea, even as Dorothea came down the altar steps to take her place in the choir, my hag laughed loud again like Satan, and cried: "Ah! the chaste virgin! who meetest the priest behind the altar! Thou shameless wanton, the prioress shall teach thee fitter behaviour soon!"

Now Dorothea turned quite pale with fright, and began: "Ah! dear sister, only listen!"

But the dragon snapped at her, with—"Dear sister, enough! What!—was she to bear this insolence? Let her know that the gracious Lady Prioress was not to be talked to as 'dear sister!'"

Here the organ struck up the confession hymn; and the whole congregation being assembled in the church, Sidonia and the seven nuns ascended the steps of the altar, bowed to the priest, and then took their seats, whereupon the organ ceased playing.

After a brief silence, the poor minister sighed heavily, and then spake: "Sidonia, after all that has been stated concerning you, particularly with regard to the death of the convent porter within these last few days, I cannot, as a faithful servant of God, give you either absolution or the holy rite of the Lord's supper, until you clear yourself from such imputations before a princely consistorium."

At this my hag laughed loud from the altar, crying, "Eh?—that was a strange story. What had she done to the convent porter?"

Ille.—"Prayed him to death, as every one believed, and his appearance proved."

Hæc (still laughing).—"He must have lost his senses. Let him go home and bind asses' milk upon his temples; he would soon be better."

Ille.—"She should remember where and what she spoke. Had she not herself said, she would pray the porter to death?"

Hæc (laughing yet louder).—"Oh! in truth his little bit of mother wit was quite gone. When and where had it been ever heard that one person could pray another to death? Then they might pray them to life again. Shall she try it with the porter?"

Ille.—"Why then had she threatened it?"

Hæc (still laughing).—"Ah! poor man! she saw now he was quite foolish. Why had she threatened? Why, in anger of course, because the vile churl had flung her against the wall. Had he never heard the poor people say to each other, 'May the devil take you;' but if one happened to die soon after, did people really think the devil had taken him? Why he was as superstitious as an old spinning-wife."

Ille.—"She had heard his resolve. This was no place to argue with her; therefore she might go her ways, for would verily not give her absolution."

So Sidonia rose up raging from the confessional, clenched her hand, and screamed out in the still church, so that all the people shuddered with horror: "Ye are all my witnesses that this worthless priest has denied me absolution, because, forsooth, he says I killed the convent porter. Ha! ha! ha! Where is it said in your Scriptures that one man can pray another to death? But the licentiousness of the vile priest has turned his brain, and he wallows in all most senseless superstitions. Did he not run after my old hag of a servant, as I myself saw; and this was not enough, but he must take Dorothea Stettin (the hypocritical wanton) behind the altar alone; and because I and these seven maidens discovered his iniquity, he refuses me the rites, and must have me before a princely consistorium to revenge himself. But wait, priest, I will drag the sheep's clothing from thee. Wait, thou shalt yet repent this bitterly!"

After the horrible sorceress had so blasphemed, she departed as quickly as possible from the church, muttering to herself. The congregation remained silent from fear and terror; and the poor priest, who seemed more dead than alive, prayed the sexton to fetch him a cup of water, which he drank; and then being in some degree recovered, he stepped forth, and addressed the congregation thus:—

"Dear brethren and friends, after what ye have just heard, ye will not wonder if I am unable to receive confessions this day, or to administer the holy communion. Ye all know Dorothea Stettin, neither is my character unknown to you; therefore remember the words of St. Peter, —'The devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.' But we will resist him, steadfast in the faith. Meet me, then, to-morrow here at the altar, and ye shall hear my justification. After which, I will shrive those who desire to be partakers of the holy sacrament."

And on the following morning, the holy minister of God preached from Matthew v. 11—"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil falsely against you, for my sake; be glad and comforted, for ye shall be well recompensed in heaven." And in this powerful sermon he drew a picture of Sidonia from

her youth up; so that many trembled for him when they remembered her power, though they glorified God for the mighty zeal and courage that burned in his words. But when Sidonia heard of this sermon, she became almost frantic from rage.

CHAPTER VI.

DOROTHEA STETTIN FALLS SICK, AND HOW THE DOCTOR MANAGES TO BLEED HER.—ITEM, HOW SIDONIA CHASES THE PRINCELY COMMISSIONERS INTO THE OAK-FOREST.

SUCH a public humiliation the good virgin Dorothea Stettin found it impossible to bear. She fell sick, and repented with bitter tears of the trust and confidence she had reposed in Sidonia; finally the abbess sent off a message to Stargard for the *medicus* Dr. Schwalenburg.

This doctor was an excellent little man, rather past middle age though still unmarried, upright and honest, but rough as bean-straw. When he stood by Dorothea's bed and had heard all particulars of her illness, he bid her put out her hand, that he might feel her pulse. "No, no;" she answered, "that could she never do; never in her life had a male creature felt her pulse." At this my doctor laughed right merrily, and all the nuns who stood round, and Sidonia's old maid Wolde laughed likewise, but at last he persuaded Dorothea to stretch out her hand.

"I must bleed her," said the doctor. "This is *febris putrida*; therefore was her thirst so great: she must strip her arm till he bleed her." But no one can persuade her to this, strip her arm! no, never could she do it, she would die first: if the doctor could do nothing else, he may go his ways.

Now the doctor grew angry. Such a cursed fool of a woman he had never come across in his life; if she did not strip her arm instantly, he would do it by force. But Dorothea is inflexible; say what he would, she would strip her arm for no man!

Even the abbess and the sisterhood tried to persuade her—

"Would she not do it for her health's sake; or, at least, for the sake of peace?"

They were all here standing round her, but all in vain. At last, the doctor, half-laughing, half-cursing, said—

"He would bleed her in the foot. Would that do?"

"Yes, she would consent to that; but the doctor must leave the room while she was getting ready."

So my doctor went out, but on entering again found her sitting on the bed, dressed in her full convent robes, her head upon Anna Apenborg's shoulder, and her foot upon a stool. As the foot, however, was covered with a stocking, the doctor began to scold—

"What was the stocking for? Let him take off the stocking. Was she making a fool of him? He advised her not to try it."

"No," Dorothea answered, "never would she strip her foot for him. Die she would if die she must, but that she could never do! If he could not bleed her through the stocking, he may go his ways."

Summa.—As neither prayers nor threatening were of any avail, the doctor, in truth, had to bleed her through the stocking; and, scarcely had he finished, when Sidonia sent, saying—

"That she, too, was ill, and wished to be bled."

And there lay my hag alone, in bed, as the doctor entered. She was right friendly.

"And was it indeed true that absurd fool, Dorothea, did not choose to be bled? Now he saw himself what a set of simpletons she had to deal with in the convent. No wonder that they all blackened her and belied her. She was sick from very disgust at such malice and absurdity. Ah, she regretted now not having married, when she had the opportunity; it would have been better, and she had many offers. But she always feared she was too poor. However her fortune was now excellent, for her sister had died without children, and left her everything—a very large inheritance, as she heard. But the dear doctor must taste her beer; she had tapped some of the best, and there was a fresh can of it on the table."

But my doctor was too cunning not to see what she was

driving at; besides he had heard of her beer-brewing, so he answered—

“He never drank beer; but what ailed her?”

“Ah, she didn’t know herself, but she had a trembling in all her limbs. Would he not take a glass of mead, or even water? Her old servant should bring it to him.”

“No. Let her just put out her hand, for him to feel her pulse.”

Instantly she stretched forth, not her hand alone, but her whole naked, dry, and yellow arm from the bed. Whereupon the doctor spoke—

“Eh? What should I bleed you for? The pulse is all right. In fact, old people never should be bled without serious cause; for at seventy or so, mind ye, every drop is worth a groschen.”

“What!” exclaimed Sidonia, starting up; “what the devil, do ye think I am seventy? Why, I am hardly fifty yet.”

“Seventy or fifty,” answered the doctor, “it is all much the same with you women-folk.”

“To the devil with you, rude churl!” screamed Sidonia. “If you will not bleed me I’ll find another who will. Seventy indeed! So rude a knave is not in the land!”

But my doctor goes away laughing; and, as the Ducal Commissioners had arrived to try Sidonia’s case, with the convent chaplain, he went down to meet them at Sheriff Sparling’s, and these were the commissioners—

1. Christian Ludeck, state prosecutor; a brother of the priest’s.

2. Johann Wedel of Cremzow.

3. Eggart Sparling, sheriff of Marienfließ.

4. Jobst Bork, governor of Saatzig.

This Jobst was son to that upright Marcus, whose wife, Clara von Dewitz, Sidonia had so miserably destroyed. For his good father’s sake, long since dead, their Graces of Stettin had continued him in the government of Stettin, for he walked in his father’s steps, only he was slow of speech; but he had a lovely daughter, yet more praiseworthy than her grandmother, Clara of blessed memory, of whom we shall hear more anon.

Anna—The doctor found all the commissioners assembled in the sheriff's parlour. Item: Anna Apenborg and two abbesses as witnesses, who deposed to all the circumstances which I have heretofore related; also, the abbess set forth the prayer of the sick Dorothea Stettin, that she might be restored to the sub-prioret out of which the false Sidonia had wickedly talked her, and now for thanks gave her insolent contempt and mocking sneers.

Anna Apenborg further deposed, that, looking through the key-hole of the refectory door one day, she spied the wicked witch boring a hole in the wall; in this she placed a tin-dish, and immediately after, a rich stream of cow's milk flowed down into a basin which Sidonia held beneath, and, that same day, the best cow in the convent stopped giving milk, and had never given one drop since. And because the dairy-maid, Trina Pantels, said openly this was witchcraft, and accused Sidonia and the old hag Wölfe of being evil witches—for she was not a girl to hold her tongue, not she—her knee swelled up to the size of a man's head, and day and night she screamed for agony, until another old witch that visited Sidonia, Lena of Üchtenhagen, for six pounds of wool, gave her a plaster of honey and meal to put on the knee, and what should be drawn out of the swelling, but quantities of pins and needles, and how could this have been, but by Sidonia's witchcraft?*

Many witnesses could prove this fact; for Tewes Barth, Dinnies Koch, and old Fritz were by, when the plaster was taken off.

Then Sheriff Sparling deposed, that having smothered his bees lately, he sent a pot of pure honey to each of the nuns, as was his custom; but Sidonia scolded, and said her pot was not large enough, and abused him in a cruel manner about his stinginess in not sending her more. So, some days after, as he was riding quietly home to his house, across the convent court, suddenly the whole ground before

* However improbable such accusations may seem, numbers of the like, some even still more extraordinary, may be found in the witch trials of that age, by any one who takes the trouble of referring to them.

him become covered with the shadows of bee-hives, and little shadows like bees went in and out, and wheeled about just as real bees do. Whereupon, he looked in every direction for the hives, for no shadows can be without a body, but not a hive nor a bee was in the whole place round; but he heard a peal of mocking laughter, and, on looking up, there was the wicked witch looking out at him from a window, and she called out—

Ho! Sir Sheriff, when you smother bees again, send me more honey. A couple of pounds of the best—good weight!”

And this he did to have peace for the future.

Now the commissioners noted all this down diligently, but the state prosecutor shook his head, and asked the abbess—

“Wherefore she had not long ago brought this vile witch before the princely court?”

To which she answered, sighing—

“What would that help? She had already tasted the vengeance of the wicked sorceress, and feared to taste it again. Well, night and day had she cried to God to free the convent from this she-devil, and often resolved to unfold the whole Satan’s work to his Highness, though her own life would be perilled surely by so doing. But she was ready, as a faithful mother of the convent, to lay it down for her children, if indeed that could save them. But how would her death help these poor young virgins? For, assuredly, the moment Sidonia had brought her to a cruel end, she would make herself abbess by force, and this was such a dread to the sorrowing virgins, that they themselves entreated her to keep silence and be patient, waiting for the mercy of God to help them. For truly the power of this accursed sorceress was as great as her wickedness.”

Here answered Dr. Schwalenberg—

“This power can soon be broken; he knew many receipts out of Albertus Magnus, Raimundus Lallus, Theophrastus Paracelsus, &c. against sorcery and evil witches.”

This was a glad hearing to the state prosecutor, and he answered with a joyful mein and voice—

“Marry, doctor, if you know how to get hold of this

evil hag do it at once; we shall then bind her arms, so that she can make no signs to hurt us, and clap a pitch-plaster on her mouth, to stop the said mouth from calling the devil to her help; after which, I can easily bring her with me to Stettin, and answer for all proceedings to his Grace. Probably she is a-bed still; go back, and pretend that, upon reflection, you think it will be better to bleed her. Then, when you have hold of her arm, call in the fellows, whom the sheriff will, I am sure, allow to accompany you."

"Yes, yes," cried the sheriff, "take twenty of my men with you, my good doctor, if you will."

"Well, then," resumed the state prosecutor, "let them rush in, bind the dragon, clap the pitch-plaster on her mouth, and she is ours in spite of all the devils."

"Right, all right," cried the doctor; "never fear but I'll pay her for her matrimonial designs upon me."

And he began to prepare the plaster with some pitch he got from a cobbler, when, suddenly, the state prosecutor screamed out—

"Merciful God! see there! Look at the shadow of a toad creeping over my paper, whereon I move my hand!"

He springs up—wipes, wipes, wipes, but in vain; the unclean shadow is there still, and crawls over the paper, though never a toad is to be seen.

What a commotion of horror this Satan's work caused amongst the by-standers, can be easily imagined. All stood up and looked at the toad-shadow, when the abbess screamed out: "Merciful God! look there! look there! The whole floor is covered with toad-shadows! Hereupon, all the women-folk ran screaming from the room, but screamed yet louder when they reached the door, and met there Sidonia and her cat face to face. Round they all wheeled again, rushed to the back-door, out into the yard, over the pond, and into the oak-wood, without daring once to look behind them. But the men remained, for the doctor said bravely: "Wait now, good friends, patience, she can do us no harm;" and he murmured some words.

But just as they all made the sign of the cross, and silently put up a prayer to God, and gathered up their legs

on the benches, so that the unclean shadows might not crawl upon their boots, the horrible hag appeared at the window, and her cat in his little red hose clambered up on the sill, mewing and crying (and I think myself that this cat was her spirit Chim, whom she had sent first to the sheriff's house to hear what was going on; for how could she have known it?)

Summa.—She laid one hand upon the window, the better to look in, and clenching the other, shook it at them, crying out: "Wait, ye accursed peasant boors, I too will judge ye for your sins!" But seeing her cousin, Jobst Bork, present, she screamed yet louder: "Eh! thou thick ploughman, hath the devil brought thee here too? Art thou not ashamed to accuse thy own kinswoman? Wait, I will give thee something to make thee remember our relationship!"

And as she began to murmur some words, and spat out before them all, the state prosecutor jumped up and rushed out after the women, and Sheriff Sparling rushed out after him, and they never stopped or stayed till both reached the oak-wood.

But Jobst said calmly, "Cousin, be reasonable; it is my duty!" My doctor, however, wanted to pay her off for the marriage business, so he seized a whip with which Sheriff Sparling had been thrashing a boor, and hurrying out, cried: "I will make her reasonable! Thou old hag of hell! here is the fit marriage for thee!" and so whack, whack, upon her thin withered shoulders.

Truly the witch cried out now in earnest, but began to spit at the same time, so that the doctor had given but four strokes when the whip fell from his hand, and he tottered hither and thither, crying, "Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" At this the sorceress laughed scornfully, and mocking his movements, cried out likewise, "Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" and when the poor doctor fell down flat upon the earth like the old porter and others, she began to dance, chanting her infernal psalm:—

"Also kleien and also kratzen
Meine Hunde and meine Katzen."

And the cat in his little red hose danced beside her.

After which, she returned laughing to the convent to pray him to death, while the poor fellow lay groaning and gasping upon the pavement. None were there to help him, for the state prosecutor and Wedeln had made off to Stargard as quick as they could go, and Sheriff Sparling was still hiding in the bush. However, Jobst and the old dairy-woman helped him up as best they could, and asked what ailed him? to which he groaned in answer, "There seemed to be some one sitting inside his breast, and breaking the *cartilago ensiformis* horribly asunder. Ah, God! ah, God! he was weak indeed! his hour was come; let them lay him in a coach, and carry him directly to Stargard."

This was done as soon as the sheriff could be found, but my doctor's screams never ceased for three days, after which he gave up the ghost, and the corpse had the same appearance as that of the convent porter, which I have already noticed. Thus it happened with the wise!

But Johann Wedeln fared little better, as we shall see; for after the doctor's strange death, he said openly everywhere, he would never rest till the accursed witch was burned. Anna Apenborg repeated this in the convent, and to Sidonia's maid, upon which the witch sent for Anna, and asked was the report true? And when the other did not deny it, she exclaimed: "Now for this shall the knave be contracted all his life long, and twist his mouth *thus*." Whereupon she mimicked how his shoulders would be drawn up to his ears, and twisted her mouth in horrible contortions, so that it was a shame and sin to look at her. And truly, this misfortune fell upon him from that hour. And afterwards when he heard of her wickedness, from Anna Apenborg and others, and brought her to an account for her sorcery in Stettin, she made him bite the dust and lie in his coffin ere long, out of malice and terrible revenge, as we shall hear further on.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW THE ASSEMBLED POMERANIAN PRINCES HOLD A COUNCIL
OVER SIDONIA,* AND AT LENGTH CITE HER TO APPEAR AT
THE DUCAL COURT.

WHEN the state prosecutor, Christian Ludeck, reached Stettin with his appalling news, the Duke was seriously troubled in mind as to how he could best save the holy sisterhood, and indeed the whole land, from the terrible Satanic power and murderous malice of this cruel sorceress. So he summoned all the princes of his family to a convocation on a certain day, at old Stettin; but, when they arrived, his Grace was absent, for he had gone to Coblenz on some business, and here was the matter.

His steward, Jeremias Schroter, was an unworthy agent, as his Grace heard; and when the time came for the poor people to get their oats or corn, he sent round and made them all give their receipts first, saying "they should have their corn after;" but when they went to bring it home he beat them, and asked what they meant—he had their receipts: they were cheats, and should get no more corn from him.

Now a poor parson's widow came up all the way to Stettin, to complain of the steward to his Highness, who was shocked at such knavery, and determined to go down himself to Coblenz and make inquiries; for the steward swore that the people were liars, and had defamed him.

The Duke, therefore, bid the chancellor, Martin Chemnitz, entertain his princely brothers until his return, which would not be before evening, and to show them his painting and sculpture galleries, and whatever else in the castle might

* Note of Bogislaff XIV.—I was not present at this council, for I was holding my espousals at the time. (The Duke married the Princess Elizabeth von Schleswig Holstein in 1615, but left no heirs.)

please them. And now to show the good heart of his Grace, I must mention that, seeing the poor widow was tired with her six miles' walk, he bid her get up beside the coachman on the box of his carriage, and he would drive her himself to her own place.

Meanwhile the young princes arrived, and the court marshal, the chancellor, the aforesaid state-prosecutor, and other high officials, received them on behalf of his Highness. Doctor Cramer, *vice-superintendens*, my esteemed father-in-law, was also present—item, Doctor Constantius Oesler.

They were first led into the picture gallery by the chancellor (although Duke George cared little about such matters), where there was a costly collection of paintings by Perugino, Raphael, Titian, Bellini, &c.—item, statues, vases, coins, and medals, all of which his Grace had brought lately from Italy. Here, also, there was a large book, covered with crimson velvet, lying open, in which his Grace the Duke had written down many extracts from the sermons of Doctor Cramer and Mag. Rentzio, with marginal Latin notes of his own; for the Duke had a table in his oratory or closet in St. Mary's church, that he might write down what pleased him, and a Greek and Latin Bible laid thereon. This book was, therefore, a right pleasing sight to Doctor Cramer, who stood and read his own sermons over again with great relish, while the others examined the paintings.

When they grew weary, the chancellor conducted them to the library, which contained ten thousand books. But Duke Ulrich said, "Marry, dear brothers, what the devil is there to see here? Let us rather go down to the stables, and examine my new Danish horses; then come up to my quarters (for his Grace lived with his brother, Duke Philip) and have a good Pomeranian carouse to pass away the time, for as to these fooleries, which have cost our good brother such a mint of money, I would not give a dollar for them all."

So they ran down the steps leading to the stables; but first he brought them into the hunting-hall, belonging to his quarter, which was decorated, and covered all along the walls with hunting-horns, rifles, cross-bows, and hunting-

knives and pouches, with the horns of all sorts of animals killed in the chase. Whereupon Duke George said, "He was content to remain here—the horses he could see on the morrow."

So he sat down by the wine-flask, which lay there already upon the table; and while Duke Ulrich was trying to persuade him to come to the stables, saying he could have the wine-flask after, the door opened, and his Highness Duke Philip unexpectedly entered the apartment.

He embraced all his dear brothers, and then, turning to Duke Francis, the bishop said: "Tell me, dear Fra (so he always called him, for his Grace spoke Italian and Latin like German), is there any hope of a christening at thy castle? oh, say yes, and I will give thee a duchy for my godchild."

But Bishop Francis answered mournfully, "No!" Then Duke Philip turned to another: "How say you, brother—mayhap there is hope of an heir to Wolgast?"

"None, alas!" was the answer.

"No, no!" exclaimed the Duke, "and there is no hope for me either—none!" Then he walked up and down the hall in great agitation, at last stopped, and lifting up his hands to heaven, cried, "Merciful God, a child, a child! is my whole ancient race to perish? Wilt thou slay us, as thou didst the first-born of Egypt? Oh! a child, a child!"

Here Doctor Cramerus advanced humbly, and said—"Your Highness should have faith. Remember what St. Paul says (Rom. iv.) concerning the faith of Abraham and Sarah; and Abraham was a hundred years old, whereas your Highness is scarce forty, therefore why despair of the mercy of God? Besides, many of his brothers were still unwed."

Hereat his Grace stood silent, and looked round at his dear brothers; but Duke George exclaimed, "You need not look at me, dear brother, for I mean never to marry" (which, indeed, was the truth, for he died some short time after at Buckow, whether through Sidonia's witchcraft I know not, at the age of thirty-five years, and unmarried. One thing, however, is certain, that his death was as strange

as the others; for in seven days he was well, sick, dead, buried).*

Samma.—His Highness first excused himself to his illustrious brothers for his absence, and related the cause, how his knave of a steward had been oppressing the poor, whereupon he determined to go himself and avenge their injuries; for a prince should be the father of his people, and it was a blessed work, the scripture said, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction (James i. 27). So he hid himself in a little closet, where he could hear everything in the widow's house, and then bid her send for the steward; and when he came, the widow asked for her corn, as usual, but he said, "She must give him the receipt first, and then she might have it;" upon which she gave him the receipt, and he went away.

Then the Duke bid the widow send a peasant and his cart for the corn; however, the old answer came back—"She was a cheat—what did she mean? He had her receipt in his hand."

Upon this the Duke drove himself to the knave, and made him, in his presence, pay down all the arrears of corn to the widow; then he beat him black and blue, for a little parting remembrance, and dismissed him ignominiously from his service. After this he had thoughts of driving round to visit Prechln of Buslar, for the rumour was afloat that Sidonia had bewitched his little son Bartel, scarcely yet a year old, and made him grow a beard on his chin like an old carl's, that reached down to his little stomach. But as his dear brothers were waiting for him, his Grace had given up this journey, particularly as he wished to hear their opinions without delay, as to what could be done to free the land from this evil sorceress Sidonia. Hereupon he bade Christian Ludeck, the state prosecutor, to read the proceedings at Marienfliess from his notes.

As he proceeded to read the Acta, the listeners crossed and blessed themselves; at last Duke Francis the bishop

* There was formerly a Cistercian monastery at Buckow, in the chapel of which still hangs a picture of this prince. Like most of his race, the face is in the highest degree unmeaning; indeed nothing more can be said of him than that he was born and died.

spake: "Did I not say well, when years ago in Oderkrug, I prayed our father of blessed memory to burn this vile limb of Satan, for a terrible example? But my good brother Philip sided against me with my father, and he was deemed the wiser. Who is the wiser now, I wonder? eh?"

Then Duke Philip asked Dr. Cramer: "What he thought of the matter as *theologus*?" who answered: "Your Grace must spare me; I will accuse no one, not even Sidonia, for though such things appear verily to be done by the help of the devil, yet had they no proof, seeing that no *medicus* had hitherto dissected any one of the *cadavera* which it was avowed Sidonia had bewitched to death."

Hereupon Dr. Constantius spake that he had already, by legal permission, dissected the body of his colleague, Dr. Schwalenberg, and delivered over the *visum repertum* to his Grace's chancellor. Then he described the appearances, which were truly singular, particularly that of the *cartilago ensiformis*. Item; concerning the *valvula tricuspidales*, through which the blood falls into the heart. They were so powerfully contracted that the blood was forced to take another course, for which reason, probably, the corpse seemed so dreadfully discoloured. Item; the *vena pulmonalis* had burst, from which cause the doctor had spit blood to the last. And lastly, the *glandulae sublinguales* were so swollen that the tongue could not remain in the mouth. Such a death was not natural; that he averred. But whether Sidonia's sorcery had caused it, or it were sent as a peculiar punishment by God, that he would not say; he agreed with the excellent Dr. Cramer, and thought it better to accuse no one.

"Now by the cross!" cried Duke Francis, "what else is it but devil's work? But the lords were very lukewarm, and resolved not to peril themselves; that he saw. However, if his brother, Duke Philip, permitted the whole princely race to be thus bewitched to death, he would have to answer for it at the day of judgment. He prayed him, therefore, for the love of God, to send for the hag instantly, and drag her to the scaffold."

Hereat Duke Philip sank his head upon his arm, and was silent a long space. But the state-prosecutor gave

answer, "Marry! will your Episcopal Highness then take the trouble to tell us, who is to seize the hag? I will do it not, and who else will? for methinks whoever touches her, must needs be sore tired of life."

"If no one else will," returned the bishop, "my Camyn executioner, Master Radeck, will surely do it, for he never feared a witch; besides he knows all their *arcana*."

Meanwhile, as Duke Philip still sat in deep thought, and played with a quill, the door opened, and a lacquey entered with a message from the noble Prechln of Buslar, requesting an *audienza* of his Grace. He had an infant in his arms which a wicked witch had prayed to death, and the child had a beard on it like an old man, so that all in the castle were terrified at the sight.

His Grace, Duke Philip, instantly started up. "Merciful God! is it true?" waved his hand to the lacquey, who withdrew, and then walked up and down, exclaiming still: "Merciful God! what can be done?"

"Torture! burn! kill!" cried Duke Francis, the bishop, "and to-morrow, if it be possible. I shall send this night for my executioner! trust to him. He will soon screw the soul out of the vile hag; take my word for it."

"Ay! torture, burn, kill," cried also the state-prosecutor, "and the sooner the better, gracious master. For God's sake, no mercy more!"

Here the door opened, and Prechln of Buslar entered, pale as the infant corpse that lay upon his arms. This corpse was dressed in white with black ribbons, and a wreath of rosemary encircled the little head; but, what was strange and horrible, a long, black beard depended from the infant's chin, which the wind, as the door opened, blew backward and forward in the sorrowing father's face. After him came his wife, wringing her hands wildly from grief, and an old serving-maid.

Truly the whole convocation shuddered at the sight, but Bishop Francis was the first to speak—

"And this is no devil's work!" he exclaimed. "Now, by my faith, ye and your wise doctors are fools if ye deny this evidence. Come nearer, poor fellow; set the corpse of your child down, and tell us how it came to pass. We

had heard of your strange affliction, and just spoke thereon as you entered. Ha! the sorceress cannot escape us now, methinks."

Now, when the mourning father began to tell the story, his wife set up such a weeping and lamentation, and the old nurse followed her example after such a lugubrious fashion, that their lordships could not hear a word. Whereupon his Grace, Duke Philip, was obliged earnestly to request that the women should keep silence, whilst Prechin of Buslar spoke.

I have already mentioned what grudge Sidonia had against him, because he refused to acknowledge himself her feudal vassal, by kissing her hand; also, how she accused him afterward of stealing her dog. This the poor knight related now at length, and with many tears, and continued—

"During the strife between them, she one day spat upon both his little sons, and the eldest, Dinnies, a fine fellow of seven years old, who was playing with a slipper at the time under the table, died first. But the accursed witch had stepped over to the cradle where his little Bartholomew lay sleeping, while this old nurse, Barbara Kadows, rocked him, and murmuring some words, spat upon him, and then went away, cursing, from the house. So the spell was put upon both children that same day, and Dinnies took sick directly, and in three days was a corpse; but on his little Memi first grew this great black beard, which their Lordships all saw, and then he likewise died, after crying three days and three nights in horrible torture."

The old nurse confirmed all this, and said—

"That when the horrible hag knelt down by the cradle to blow upon the child, she turned up her eyes, so that nothing but the whites could be seen. Ah! what a wicked old hag that could not spare a child like that, and could put such an old man's beard on its little face."

Then Duke Philip asked the knight if he had accused Sidonia of the witchcraft, and what had she answered—

"Ah, yes, he had done so, but by letter, for he feared to go to Marienfiess, lest it might happen to him as to others who met her face to face, and his messenger brought back

a letter in answer, by which their Lordships could see how her arrogance equalled her wickedness," and he drew forth her letter from his bosom, and handed the same to his Highness.

Now Bishop Francis would have prevented his brother touching the letter, but Duke Philip had a brave heart, and taking it boldly, read aloud as follows—

"SIDONIA, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, PRIORESS OF THE NOBLE CONVENT OF MARIENFLIESS, LADY AND HEIRESS OF THE LANDS AND CASTLE OF STRAMEHL, LABES, REGENWALD, WANGERIN, AND OTHERS—GREETING.

"GOOD FRIEND AND VASSAL,

"Touching your foul accusation respecting your two brats, and my bewitching them to death, I shall only say you must be mad. I have long thought that pride would turn your brain: now I see it has been done. If Bartel has got a beard, send for soap and shave him. As to yourself, I counsel you to come to MarienflieSS to old Kathe, she knows how to turn the brain right again with a wooden bowl. Pour hot water therein, three times boiled, set the bowl on your head, and over the bowl an inverted pot; then, as the water is drawn up into the empty pot, so will the madness be drawn up out of your brain into the wooden bowl, and all will be right again. It is a good receipt; I counsel you to try it. She only desires you to kiss her hand in return. Such is the advice of your feudal lady and seigneresS,

"SIDONIA BORK."

His Highness had hardly finished reading the letter, when Bishop Francis cried out—

"What the devil, brother, hast thou made the murderous dragon a prioress?"

But his Highness knew nothing of it, and wondered much likewise. Whereupon the state prosecutor told them how it came about, and that poor Dorothea Stettin had been talked out of her situation by the dragon, as was all here to be seen set down in full in the indictment; but, as the case was not now under discussion he would pass it over, although great quarrels and scandal prevailed in the convent in consequence, and poor Dorothea lay sick, earnestly desiring to be restored to her prioret.

Bishop Francis now grew yet more angry—

"~~Was~~ the witch a prioret in hell," he cried. "What

would his dear brother do, now that the proofs were in his hands?"

To which Duke Philip answered mildly—

"Dear Fra, think on my symbol, C. & R." (that is, *Christo et Reipublicæ*, for Christ and the State.) "Let us not be over-hasty. Suppose that Dr. Constantinus should first dissect this poor infant, and see what really caused its death."

Thereat the doctor plunged his hand in his pocket, to draw forth his case of instruments, but the mother screamed out, and ran to tear the child from him—"No, no; they should never cut up her little Memi!" Item, the maid screamed out—"No, no; she would lose her life first!" Item; the father stood still and trembled, but said never a word.

What was to be done now? His Grace repented of his hastiness, and at last said—

"Well, then, friends, let the doctor examine the infant externally, look into its mouth, &c."

And when the parents consented to this, his Grace prayed them gently to withdraw with him into another apartment while the examination was made, as such a sight might give them pain. To this also they consented, and his Grace led the way to another hall (giving a sign privately to the doctor to do his business properly), where a splendid collation was served. After which, just to detain them longer, his Grace brought them to visit the picture-gallery.

Summa.—When they returned, the dissection had been accomplished, at which sight the parents and the maid screamed; but his Grace confuted them, saying—

"That the ends of justice required it. He would now take the case into his own hands, and they might return quietly to their own castle and bury their infant, who would sleep as well dissected as entire."

Having, at last, calmed them somewhat, they kissed his hand and took their leave.

Meanwhile, the two young Dukes, Ulrich and George, finding the time hang heavy, had slipped away from the council-board, and gone down to the ducal stables.

When his Highness noticed their absence, he sent a page bidding them return and give their opinion in council, as to what should be done next. But they sent back an answer, Let the lords do what they pleased; as for them they were off to the chase, seeing it was pleasanter to hunt a hare than a witch.

Now Bishop Francis stormed in earnest.

"Marry, some folk would not believe in witchcraft, till they stood with their heels turned toward heaven; and here three idle younkers must needs ride off to the chase, when the life and death of our race hangs in the balance. I say again, brother, torture, burn, kill, and as soon as may be."

But Duke Philip still answered mildly—

"Dear Fra, the *medicus* hath just pronounced that the corpse of the poor child presents no unnatural appearances; and as to the beard, this may just as well be a *miraculum Dei* as a *miraculum dæmonis*, therefore I esteem it better to cite Sidonia to our court, and admonish her strenuously to all good."

This course had little favour from Bishop Francis, but when the state prosecutor agreed with his Highness, and Dr. Cramerus praised so Christian and merciful a resolve, he was at last content, particularly as some one said (I forget who, but I rather think it was the chancellor Martinus Chemnitz), that Mag. Joel of Grypswald, gave it as his opinion that it would be a matter of trouble and danger to seize the witch, seeing that her familiar, the spirit Chim, was a mighty and strong spirit, and capable of taking great revenge on any who laid hand upon her; but that he, Mag. Joel, would do for him easily if he came in his way.

This intelligence gave the bishop great comfort, and he instantly despatched a letter to Mag. Joel, bidding him come forthwith to Stettin, whilst the chancellor prepared a *Citationem realem sive personalem* for Sidonia, which contained the following—

"WE, PHILIP, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, ETC.

"Command thee, Sidonia von Bork, conventual and not prioress of the noble convent of Marienfless, to appear before us, at our court of

Stettin, on the 15th day of July, at three of the clock, to answer for the evil deeds whereof thou art accused, under punishment of banishment, forfeiture, and great danger to thy body and life. Against such, therefore, take thou heed.

"Signatum, Old Stettin, 10th July, 1616.

"PHILIPPUS, manu sua."

CHAPTER VIII.

OF SIDONIA'S DEFENCE.—ITEM: HOW SHE HAS A QUARREL WITH JOACHIM WEDEL, AND BEWITCHES HIM TO DEATH.

AT three of the clock on the appointed day, the grand Rittersaal (knights' hall) of the stately castle of Old Stettin was crowded with ministers, councillors, and officials, who had met there by command of their illustrious mightinesses, Duke Philip, Prince and Lord of Stettin, and Francis, Bishop of Camyn. Amongst the nobles assembled were Albert, Count of Eberstein, Lord of Neugarten and Massow; Eustache Flemming, hereditary grand-marshal; Christoph von Mildenitz, privy counsellor and dean of the honourable chapter of Camyn; Caspar von Stogentin, captain at Friedrichswald; Christoph von Plate, master of the ceremonies; Martin Chemnitz, chancellor of Pomerania; Dr. Cramer, my worthy lord father-in-law, vice-superintendens; Dr. Constantius Oesler, *medicus*; Christian Ludeck, attorney-general; Mag. Joel of Grypswald, and many others. These all stood in two long rows, waiting for their princely Graces. For it was rumoured that Sidonia had already arrived with the fish-sellers from Grabow, which, indeed, was the case; and she had, moreover, packed seven hogsheds of her best beer on the wagon along with her, purposing to sell it to profit in the town, but the devil truly got his profit out of the said beer, for by it not only our good town of Stettin, but likewise the whole land, was nearly brought to ruin and utter destruction, as we shall hear further on.

Summa.—When all the afore-named were ranged in rank and order, the great doors of the hall were flung wide open, and Duke Philip entered first. Every one knows

that he was small, delicate, almost thin in person, pale of face, with a moustache on his upper lip, and his hair combed *à la Nazarena*.^{*} He wore a yellow doublet with silver-coloured satin sleeves, scarlet hose trimmed with gold lace, white silk stockings, and white boots, with gold spurs; round his neck was a Spanish ruff of white point lace, and by his side a jewel-hilted sword; his breast and girdle were also profusely decorated with diamonds. So his Highness advanced up the hall, wearing his grey beaver hat, from which drooped a stately plume of black herons' feathers, fastened with an aigrette of diamonds. This he did not remove, as was customary, until all present had made their obeisance and deferentially kissed his hand. Duke Francis followed in his episcopal robes, with a mitre upon his head and a bishop's crook of ivory in his hand. The other young dukes, Ulrich, George, and Bogislaus remained cautiously away.[†]

And the blood-standard waved from the towers, and the princely Soldateska, with all the officers, lined the castle court, so that nothing was left undone that could impress this terrible sorceress with due fear and respect for their illustrious Graces.

And when the order was given for Sidonia to be admitted, the two princes leaned proudly on a table at the upper end of the hall, while the assembled nobles formed two long lines at each side. Three rolls of the drum announced the approach of the prisoner. But when she entered, accompanied by the Lord Provost, in her nun's robes and white veil, on which the key of her office was embroidered in gold, a visible shudder passed over her frame; collecting herself, however, quickly, she advanced to kiss their Graces' hands, but Bishop Francis, after he had drawn his symbolum with chalk before him on the table, namely, H, H, H; that is, "Help, helper, help," cried out, "Back, Satan! stir not from thy place; and know that if thou shouldst attempt any of thy diabolical sorceries upon my dear lord and brother here

^{*} Twisted in the centre, and falling down straight at each side, as in the pictures of our Saviour.

[†] Duke of Bogislaw XIV.—Yes; but not out of fear. I was celebrating my episcopal, as I have said.

(as for me, this honourable, consecrated, and priestly robe saves me from thy power) thou shalt be torn limb from limb, and thy members flung to feed the dogs, while thou art yet living to behold it, accursed, thrice accursed witch!"

And his Grace, in his great rage against her, struck the table with his ivory crook, so that he broke a bottle filled with red ink which stood thereon, and the said ink (alas! what an evil omen) poured down upon Duke Philip's white silk stockings, and stained them red like blood.

Meanwhile Sidonia exclaimed: "What! is there no leech here, to feel the pulse of his Serene Highness? Surely the dog-days, that we are in the middle of, have turned his brain completely. Any little bit of mother-wit he might have had is clean gone. What! she had scarcely entered? Knew not yet of what she was accused, and she was 'Satan!' 'a thrice accursed witch!' who was to be cut up into little bits to feed dogs! Had any man ever heard the like? Would the nobles of Pomerania, whom she saw around her, suffer one of their own rank—a lady of castles and lands—to be thus handled? She called upon them all as witnesses, and after the *audienza* a notary should be summoned to note all down, for she would assuredly appeal to the States of the kingdom, and bring her cause before the emperor."

Hereupon Duke Philip interposed: "Lady, our dear brother is of a hasty temperament; yet you can scarce wonder at his speech, or take it ill, when you consider the terrible evils which you have brought upon our ancient and illustrious race. However, as an upright and good prince must judge the cause of his subjects before his own, I shall first inquire what caused the sudden illness of the sheriff, Eggert Sparling, and of the abbess, Magdalena, that time they brought my father's letter to you?—that letter which you said was a forgery, and flung into the fire."

Illa.—"What caused it? How could she remember? It was a long time ago; but so far as she recollected, they came in when she was brewing beer or cooking sausages, and she opened the window to admit fresh air; before this window they both sat and talked, to be out of the smell of the cooking; could they not have got rheumatism by such

means? Let his Grace ask the doctors did it require witchcraft to give a man the rheumatism, who sat in a draught of air?"

The Duke.—"But both were cured again as quickly as they had taken it."

Illa.—"Ah, yes! She would have done her best to cure even her greatest enemy, for the Holy Saviour had said:—'Bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; pray for them that persecute you.' To such commands of her Lord she had ever been a faithful servant, and therefore searched out of her cookery-book for a *sympatheticum*, but for thanks, lo now what she gets! Such was the way of this wicked world. Perhaps my gracious Lord would like to know of the *sympatheticum*; she would say it for him, if he wished."

"Keep it to yourself, woman," roared Duke Francis, "and tell us why you burned my father's letter?"

Illa.—"Because, in truth, she deemed it a forgery. How could she believe a knave who had already deceived his own gracious Prince? For did not this base sheriff appropriate to his own use eleven mares, one hundred sheep, sixteen head of cattle, and forty-two boars, all the property of his Highness, to the great detriment of the Princely revenue. Item; at the last cattle sale, he had put three hundred florins into his own bag, and many more evil deceits had this wicked cheat practised."

"Keep to the question," cried Duke Philip, "and answer only what you are asked. What was that matter concerning the priest, which caused you to complain of him to our Princely consistorium?"

Illa.—"Ay! and no notice taken, though it was a scandal that cried to Heaven, how this licentious young carl was admitted into the convent as chaplain, when the regulations especially declared that an honourable *old* man should hold the office. She prayed, therefore, that another priest might be appointed."

Bereat my worthy father-in-law, Dr. Cramer, said,—

"Good lady, be not so hasty; from all we have heard, this priest is a right worthy and discreet young man."

Illa.—"Right worthy and discreet truly! as her old

maid could testify; or the abbess, with whom he locked himself up; or Dorothea Stettin, with whom he was discovered behind the holy altar. Fie! The scandal that such a fellow should be convent chaplain! and that a Christian government should suffer it!" (Spitting three times on the ground).

The Duke.—"The inquiry concerning him was pending. For what cause had she forced herself into the sub-prioret?"

Illa.—"She! Forced herself! Forced herself into the sub-prioret! What devil had invented this story? Why the abbess and the whole convent were witness that she was forced into it; for as Dorothea Stettin was ashamed, after that business behind the altar, when she was discovered with the priest—besides, was a weak silly thing at all times—she had consented to relieve her from the sub-prioret at her (Dorothea's) earnest supplication and prayer."

The Duke.—"Wherefore had she treated the novices with such cruelty, and run at them with axes and knives, to do them grievous bodily harm?"

Illa.—"They were a set of young wantons, always gossiping about marriage and loons, therefore she had held a strict hand over them, which she would not deny; particularly as if any of the nuns fell into sin, the law decreed that she was to be beheaded. Was she therefore wrong or right? Truly the abbess said nothing, for she was as bad as any of them, and had locked herself up with the priest."

The Duke.—"What caused the sudden death of the convent porter?"

Illa.—"What! was this, too, laid on her as a crime? Why, at last, if any one died in Wolgast, or another in Marienfließ during her absence, she would have to answer for it."

The Duke.—"But Dr. Schwalenberg had died in the self-same way, and as suddenly—tumbling down dead upon the pavement."

Illa.—"The knave was so drunk, when he ran after her with a horsewhip to beat her, that he tumbled down on the stones; and mayhap the shock killed him, as it did that other knave who flung her against the wall; or that he got a fit; for such would have been a just judgment of God."

on him, as it is written (Malachi iii. 5), 'I will be a swift witness for the widow and the orphan.' Ah! truly she was a poor orphan, and the just God had been her swift witness; for which, all praise and glory be to his name for ever."—(Weeping.)

Here Christoph Mildenitz, canon of Camyn, exclaimed—"Marry, thou wicked viper, I have seen the corpse of this same Schwalenberg myself, and every one, even the physicians, said that he had died no natural death."

Illa.—"Must the fat canon put in his word now? Ha! this was her thanks for the gloves she had knit him, and which he wore at this present moment, for she knew them, even at that distance, by the black seams round the thumbs. But so it was ever: she had no greater enemies than those whom she had done kindness to."

The Duke.—"Prechln von Buslar also accused her of having brought his two sons to death, and making a long man's-beard grow upon the little Bartel."

Illa (laughing).—"Ah! it is easy to see by your Grace that we are in the dog-days. Your Highness must pardon my mirth; but who could help it? Merciful God! are thy wonders, sent to fright the world, and turn men from sin, to be called devil's sorceries! To what a pass is the world come! Has your Highness forgotten all history? Know you not that God gives many signs to his people, and speaks in wonders? Yet, when did men, till now, say that these signs were of the devil alone, and persecute and destroy helpless women by reason of them? Speak, gracious Duke—speak, ye noble lords—have ye not tortured, and burned, and put to death, weak and innocent women without number for these things, and must ye needs now seek my life? and when was it ever known, till now, that nobles sat in judgment upon one of their own rank—a lady of as high blood and proud descent as any of ye here—for old wives' tales like these, and children's fooleries? Speak! Whoso saith I lie, let him step forward and convict me."*

There was a dead silence in the hall when she had ended,

* It was a fact that the persecution of witches had risen at this period almost to a mania.

and even Duke Philip looked down ashamed, for he could not but acknowledge that she spoke the truth, however unwillingly he believed aught the vile sorceress uttered.

At last Bishop Francis spake: "Why then didst thou blow upon the children of Prechln of Buslar, if it were not to bewitch them to death?"

Whereupon the witch answered scornfully: "If that could kill, then were we all dead long since, for the wind blows on us every minute, and we blow upon our hot broth to cool it, yet who dies thereof? How could a bishop be so sunk in superstition? as to Prechln of Buslar, no wonder if God had smitten him for his pride and arrogance, as it is said, Luke i. 51, 'He scatters such as are proud of heart,' for though her feudal vassal, he had refused to do her homage, therefore here was no witch-work but only God's work, testifying against sinful haughtiness and pride.

"Moreover, it was false that she had blown upon the children; the silly fool Prechln had imagined it all, nothing was too absurd for stupidity like his to believe; and what then? Can't people die but by witchcraft? Did St. Peter bewitch that covetous knave Ananias (Acts v.), when he fell down dead at his feet for having lied to the Holy Ghost? Let the honourable convocation answer her truly."

Summa; the end of all was, (as we may imagine) that the cunning Satan was allowed to depart in peace, only receiving a wholesome admonition from his Highness, Duke Philip, and another from my worthy father-in-law, Dr. Cramer.

But what happened, as she returned to her lodgment in the Rüdenberg street? Behold Joachim Wedel of Cremzow, whom she had made contracted, sat at his window to enjoy the air, but the evil hag no sooner looked up and saw him than she began to mock him, twisting her mouth awry, even as he twisted his mouth. When he observed her, his face grew red with anger, and he cried out of the window: "Ha, thou accursed witch, I am not so help—help—help—helpless as thou thinkest; so do not twi—twi—twi—twist thy mouth at me that way."

To which Sidonia only answered with the one word "Wait!" and passed on, but returned soon again with a

to be hung," &c. and they struck fiercely on the table, so that the glasses rang.

Just then an old hag came to the door, but not in a cloister habit. She had a black plaster upon her nose, and complained how she had hurt herself by falling on the sharp stones, which had put her nose out of joint.

"People talked of this new decree—was it true that the poor folk were to pay sixteen Pomeranian pence for a quart of beer?—Oh, God! what the cruelty and avarice of princes could do. But she scarcely believed the report, for she brewed beer herself better than any brewer in the land, and yet could sell the quart for eight-pence, and have profit besides. Oh, that princes and ministers could rob the poor man so! ay, they would take the very shirt off his back to glut their own greed and covetousness. And what did they give their hard-earned gold for? to build fine houses for the Prince, forsooth, and fill them with fine pictures from Italy, and statues, as if he were a brat of a school-girl, and must have his dolls to play with."

"What sort is your beer, old dame?" asked a fellow; "marry, it must be strange trash, I warrant."

Illa.—"No, no; if they would not believe her word, let them taste the beer. She wanted nothing further but to prove how the wicked government oppressed the poor folk; for she was a God-fearing woman, and her heart was filled with grief to see how the princes lately, in this poor Pomerania, squeezed the very life-blood out of the people," &c. Then she lifted up a barrel of beer upon the table (I have already said that Sidonia had brought some with her to sell), and invited the discontented people to taste it, which they were nothing loth to do, and soon broached the said barrel. Then, having tasted, they extolled her beer to the skies—"No better had ever been brewed." Now other troops of the discontented came pouring in from Lastadie, Wiek, &c. cursing, and swearing, and shouting: "The beer must not be raised; they would force the government to take off the tax. Would not their comrades join?"

This was fine fun to the old hag, and she produced another barrel of beer, which the mob emptied speedily, and then began talking, shouting, screaming, roaring like flocks

of wild geese; and when the old hag saw that they had got enough under their caps to make them quite desperate, she began—

“Was not her beer as good as any beer in the duchy?”

“Ay, ay, better!” shouted the mob; “where dost thou live, mother?”

To this she gave no answer, but continued: “Yet this beer cost but eight-pence a quart, by which they could see how the wicked and cruel government oppressed them; oh, it was a sin that cried to heaven, to see how princes and nobles scourged and skinned the poor folk. They swilled wine of the best, and plenty, in their own gorgeous castles, but grudged poor bitter poverty its can of beer! Shame on such a government!”

“True, true!” shouted the mob; “she is right: we are scourged and skinned by these worthless nobles. Come, brothers, let us off to the council-hall, and if they will not take off the tax, we’ll murder every soul of them.”

Illa.—“And be asses for their pains. Was that all they could do—*pray* the mighty council, forsooth, to lower the tax? Oh, brave fellows! What! had they not the power in their own hands, if they would only be united? Had they never heard how the people of Anklam had, in former times, killed their rulers and governors, and then did justice to themselves? What right had prince, minister, or council to skin a people? They had all stout arms and brave hearts here, as she saw; *could they not right themselves?*—must they needs crouch for their own to prince or minister? Did she lie, or did she speak the truth?”

Here the mob cheered and shouted, “True! true!” and they struck the table till the glasses broke, roaring, “She is right, brothers. Are we not strong? Can we not right ourselves? Why should we go begging to a council? May the devil take all the covetous, rich knaves, who drink the people’s blood!”

Illa.—“But maybe they wanted a prince—eh? The prince was the shepherd, the council only the dog who bit the sheep, as his master commanded. Eh, children? is not a prince a fine thing, to squeeze the sweat and life-blood out of ye, and turn it into gold for himself? For what are

his riches but your sweat and blood, if ye reflect on it; and is it a sin to take your own? Methinks if all princes were killed or banished, and their goods divided amongst the people, ye would all have enough. Have ye not heard of that brotherhood, who set all princes and governments at defiance for two hundred years, and lived like brothers amongst themselves, dividing all goods alike, so that they were called Like-dealers; and no beggar was found amongst them, for they had all things in common.* Wherefore can ye not be Like-dealers also? Are there not rich enough for ye to kill? And if ye are united, who can withstand you? Look at the dog and the cattle—how the poor stupid beasts let themselves be driven, and bit, and beaten, just because they are used to it; but, lo! if the cattle should all turn their horns against the dog and the shepherd, what becomes of my fine pair? So is it with the prince and his council. Oh, if ye were only united! Fling off the parsons too, for they are prime movers of all your misery. Do they

* These Like-dealers were the communists of the northern middle ages, and were for a number of years the plague of the northern seas; until at the beginning of the fifteenth century they were subdued, and many of them captured by the Dutch, who nailed them up in barrels, leaving an aperture for the head at top, and then decapitated them. The best account of them is found Raumer's Historical Note-book, vol. ii. p. 19. And if any one wishes to see the result of communist teaching, they have only to study here the horrible excesses to which it leads.

The communism of the apostolic age might have been suited to a period in which it would be difficult to say whether faith or love predominated most; but even then it by no means prevented the existence of extreme poverty, for we read frequently in the Acts and Epistles of the *collections* made for the Christian churches. But in our faithless, loveless, selfish, sin-drowned century, such an attempt at community of goods would not only annihilate all morality completely, but absolutely degrade us back from civilization and modern Catholicism into the rudest and most meagre barbarism. The apostles of such doctrines now must speak, though perhaps unconsciously, from the sole inspiration of Satan, like Sidonia. The progress of humanity is not to be furthered by such means. Let our merchants no longer degrade human beings into machines for their factories, nor our princes degrade them into automaton puppets for their armies, but of men make *living men*. And the strong energy, the stern will, the vital spiritual power that will thus be awakened, will and must produce the regeneration of humanity.

not teach you, and teach you from your youth up, that ye must have princes and priests? Eh, brothers, where is that written in the scriptures?

"Doth not St. Peter say (1st Epistle chap. ii.), 'Ye are a royal priesthood?' What, then, if ye are kings, princes, and priests yourselves, must ye needs pay for other kings, princes, and priests? Can ye not govern yourselves? can ye not pray for yourselves? In my opinion, yes! Doth not the same St. Peter likewise call ye 'a chosen people,' 'a people of inheritance;' but, I pray you, where is your inheritance?—poor beggars as ye are—to whom neither priest nor prince will give one can of beer. Ha! go, I tell you—take back your kingship, your priesthood, your inheritance. Become Like-dealers, brothers, even as the early Christians, who had all things in common, before the greed of priest or prince had robbed them of all. Like-dealers! Like-dealers! run, run—kill, slay, strike all dead, and never rest until ye drown the last priest in the blood of the last prince!"

As the hag thus spoke, through the horrible inspiration of Satan, the passions of the mob rose to frenzy, and they rushed out and joined the bands in the streets, and the crowds that poured from every door; and as they repeated her words from one to the other the frenzy spread (for they were like oil to fire). But the hag with the black plaster on her nose, when she saw herself left alone in the chamber, looked out after them, and laughed, and danced, and clapped her hands.

Now the Prince and count had withdrawn to Colbatz for safety, and a council was summoned in all haste and anxiety. The water-gate was barred likewise, to prevent a junction with the people of Lastadie and Wiek, but the town's-people, who had gathered in immense crowds, broke it in, and joining with the others, proceeded to storm the council-hall, where the honourable council were then sitting. They shouted, roared, menaced, and seizing the clerk, Claude Lorenz, in the chamber, murdered him before the very eyes of the burgomasters, and flung the body out of the window; then rushing down the steps again, proceeded along the corn-market, and by the high-street into the

horse-market, where they sacked three breweries from the roof to the cellar; and dragging out the barrels, staved in the bottom, and drank out of their hats and caps, shouting, roaring, singing, and dancing while they swilled the good beer; so that the sight was a scandal to God and man.

And the uproar waxed stronger and stronger throughout that whole night. Not a word of remonstrance or exposition will the people listen to; they threaten to hang up the messengers of the honourable council, and show no respect even to a mandate from his Highness, under his own seal and hand, which a horseman brings them. They laugh, mock, fling it into the gutter, sack more breweries, and by ten of the clock, just as the citizens are going to church, they number ten bands strong.

So my worthy father-in-law Dr. Cramer, with the dean and archdeacon of St. Mary's, stood upon the steps at the church-door as the bells rung, and the mob rushed by to sack more breweries. And he spoke friendly to the rioters: "They should stop and hear what the word of God said about the uproar at Ephesus, Acts 19."

And some would, and some would not. What did they want with parsons? strike all the parsons dead. They could play the priest for themselves, and forgive their own sins; yet many went in, for it was the custom to attend the weekly preaching, and my worthy father-in-law, turning round, addressed them from the nave of the church—methinks they needed it!

One very beautiful comparison that he employed made a great impression, and brought many to reason. For he spoke of the bees, how when they wander too far from the hive, they can be brought back by soft sweet melody, and so might this wild and wandering human swarm be brought back to the true hive, by the soft and thrilling melody of God's holy word. Then for conclusion he read the Princely mandate from the altar; but at this the uproar recommenced, and they ran shouting and screaming out of the church, and to their wild work again, staving in the barrels and drinking the beer; and they insulted a magistrate that spoke mildly to them, and said if they would be quiet, he would try and have the tax removed. So they raged like

the bands of Korah and Abiram; wanted to kill every one, all the rich—and divide their goods; for their riches were their blood and sweat. They would drag the four guilds to the council-hall, and the chief burgomasters, and hang them all up, and afterwards the honourable council, and all the priests, &c. So passed the first and second day.

On the third morning by six of the clock, his Highness Duke Philip, with all his suite, drove in six coaches from Colbatz up to the Oderstrasse, galloping into the middle of the crowd of noisy, drunken rioters, who thronged the grass-market as thick as bees in a swarm.

He wished to pass on quickly to the castle, but could not, so he had to see and hear for himself how the insurrection raged, and the mob surrounded the coach of his Highness with loud cries, in which nothing could be heard distinctly, but on one side "Kill him!" and on the other "Let him go!" This made Bishop Francis wild with anger, and he wanted to jump out of the coach and beat back the people, but Duke Philip gently restrained him. "See you not," he said, "the people are sick? hot words will increase their sickness." Then he motioned to Mag. Rentzio, the court chaplain, who sat in the coach, to admonish the crowd.

But the moment the Reverend M. Rentzio put his head out of the window to address them, the people shouted—"Down with the parson! what is he babbling for? Dr. Cramer told us all that yesterday. We want no parsons; kill them! kill them!—Down with priests! down with princes!" And they sprang upon the horses to cut the traces, but the coachman and out-riders slashed away right and left with their horsewhips, so that the mob recoiled; and then with loud shouts of "Make way! make way!" the coachman lashed his horses forward into a gallop.

But behold as they crossed the Shoe-strasse, a coarse thick-set woman knelt by the kennel with her daughter, a half-grown girl, and they were drinking beer from a barrel like calves. This same woman was knocked down by the foremost horse, so that she fell into the gutter. Hereat she roared and cursed his princely Grace, and flung the beer-can at him, but it fell upon the horse, who grew

wild, and dashed off in a mad gallop across the Shoe-strasse into the Pelzer-strasse, and up to the castle without pausing, where a large crowd had already collected.

If the sovereign people had been wild before, they were ten times more wild now, and ran to try and get into the castle after his Highness; but the Duke ordered the gates to be closed. He finding that the courts and corridors were already filled with the members of the venerable council, and three hundred of the militia, bade the men stand to their arms, load the heavy artillery, and erect the blood-standard on the tower, while he and the Princes, with the honourable members, considered what could best be done in this grave and dangerous crisis. Whereupon, he bade the council attend him in the state banqueting-hall.

Now the honourable council declared they were ready to part life and limb for their liege lord, and the illustrious house of Pomerania, according to the terms of their oath; but the burghers would not. For when Duke Philip asked would not the burghers go forth, and help to disperse this armed and unruly mob, the militia made sundry objections, and set forth numerous difficulties. Whereupon Bishop Francis started up, and exclaimed—"Brother, I pray thee; do not stoop to conciliate the people! If ye know not how to die, I can go forth and die for all—since it has come to this—" and he rose to depart.

But his Highness seized him by the hand, and entreated patience yet for one hour more. Then he turned to the militia, and again admonished them of their duty, and bid them remember the oath, but they answered sharply, "Why the devil should we go forth and shoot our brothers, neighbours, and friends? they are more to us than all. Item, they recapitulated their objections and difficulties."

Hereupon his Highness exclaimed: "Alas! how comes it that my good people of Stettin are so unruly? If the Stralsunders indeed had risen, I would say nothing, but my dear Stettiners, who have ever been so true and loyal, holding to their province through all adversities, and now—ah! that I should live to see this day!"

Then Bishop Francis spake: "Truly, our good Stettiners are to be known no longer. Were it possible to bewitch a

whole people, I would say this witch-devil of Marienflies had done it. For in all Pomeranian land was it ever heard that the people refused obedience to their Prince, as the burgher militia here have dared to refuse this day?"

Just then the evil tidings arrived, that the mob were sacking the house of one of the chiefs of the council, whereupon his Highness, Duke Philip, called out again: "Will ye stand by me or not? Here is no time for hesitation but action. Will ye follow me? Speak, lieges!"

Hereat a couple of hundred voices responded "Yes, yes;" but the "yes" fell as dull and cold upon the ear as the clang of a leaden bell.

However Bishop Francis instantly exclaimed: "Good! go then, all of ye, to the armoury, and arm yourselves with speed. Meanwhile, I shall see to the loading of the cannon in the castle-court. Then whosoever among you is for God and the Prince, follow me to victory or death."

But Duke Philip interposed. "Not so, dear brother; not so, my good lieges; let us try first what reconciliation will do, for they are my erring children."

And though Duke Francis was sore displeased and impatient, yet my gracious Prince dispatched his chief equerry, Andreas Ehlers, as herald to the people, dressed in complete armour, and with a drawn sword in his hand, accompanied by three trumpeters, to read a new Princely proclamation to the people.

So the herald rode first to the grass-market, and when the trumpet sounded, the people stood still and listened, whereupon he read the following proclamation, in a loud voice:—

"The Serene and Illustrious Prince and Lord, Lord Philip, Duke of Stettin, Pomerania, Cassuben, and Wenden, Prince of Rugen, Count of Gutzkow, and Lord of the lands of Lauenburg and Butow, our Gracious Prince, Seigneur, and Lord, hereby commandeth all present, from Lastadie, Wiek, Drägers, and other places assembled, to lay down their arms, and retire each man to his own home in peace and quietness, without offering further molestation to his loyal Lieges, Burghers, and Citizens, on pain of severe punishment in person and life, and deprivation of all wonted privileges. Further, if they have aught of complaint against the Honourable Council or Burghesses, let them bring the same before his Highness himself. Meanwhile, the

quart of beer, until further orders, shall be reduced to its original price, as agreed on yesterday in Council, and be sold henceforth for one Stralsund shilling.

"Signatum, Old Stettin, the 18th July, 1616.

"PHILIPPUS, manu sua."

When the herald had finished reading, and shown the Princely signature and seal to the ring-leaders, a great murmur arose among the crowd, of which, however, the herald took no heed, but rode on to the horse-market, where he likewise read the proclamation, and so on through the principal thoroughfares. Then he returned to the grass-market, but lo! not a soul was to be seen; the crowds had all dispersed, and quietness reigned everywhere, whereupon the herald rode joyfully to the horse-market, to see if the like had happened there. And truly, peace had returned here too. And all along the principal streets where the proclamation had been read, the people were thoroughly subdued by this Princely clemency and authority.

So when the herald returned to the castle, and related the success of his mission, the tears filled the eyes of his Grace, Duke Philip, and taking his lord brother by the hand, he exclaimed: "See, dear Francis, how true are the words of Cicero, *Nihil tam popolare quam bonitas*."* Then they both went forth and walked arm in arm throughout the town, and wherever his Grace saw any group still gathered round the beer-cans, he told them to be content, for the beer should be sold to them at the Stralsund shilling. And thus the riot was quelled, and the town returned to its accustomed quietness and order.

Now truly, the same Cicero says, "*in imperita multitudine res variæ et inconstantia et crebra tanquam tempestatum, sic sensuum commutatio*."†

* (Nothing so popular as kindness.)

† (The senseless multitude are changeful and inconstant as the weather, and their opinions suffer as many mutations.)

CHAPTER X.

OF THE FEARFUL EVENTS THAT TAKE PLACE AT MARIENFLIESS.

ITEM; HOW DOROTHEA STETTIN BECOMES POSSESSED BY THE DEVIL.

MEANWHILE Satan hath not been less busy at Marienfliess, in Sidonia's absence, than at Old Stettin in her presence. But he cunningly changed his mode of action, not to be recognised, and truly, Dorothea Stettin was the first he practised on. For having recovered from her sickness, she one day presented herself at church in the nun's choir as usual; but while joining in the closing hymn, she suddenly changed colour, began to sob and tremble in every limb, then continued the chant in a strange uncertain voice, sometimes treble, sometimes bass, like that of a lad whose beard is just beginning to grow. At this, the abbess and the sisterhood listened and stared in wonder, then asked if the dear sister had fallen ill again?

"No," she answered gruffly, "she only wanted to be married. She was tired of playing the virgin. Did the abbess know, perchance, of any one who would suit her as bridegroom? For she must, and would be married!"

Think now of the horror of the nuns. Still they thanked God that such a *scandalum* had happened during the singing, and not at the blessed sermon. Then they seized her by the arms, and drew her away to her cell. But woe, alas! scarcely had she reached it, when she threw herself upon her bed in strong convulsions. Her eyes turned so that only the whites were to be seen, and her face grew so drawn and strange that it was a grief to look upon it, and still she kept on screaming in the deep gruff man's voice: "For a bridegroom! a bridegroom!" she that was so modest, and had such a delicate gentle voice. Whereupon all the sisters rushed in to hear her, the moment the sermon was over; item, the priest in his surplice.

But the unfortunate maiden no sooner beheld him, than she cried out in the deep bass voice: "David, I must marry;

wilt thou be my bridegroom?" And when he answered: "Alas, poor girl! when was such speech ever heard from you before? Satan himself must have possessed you!" she cried out again, "Hold your chatter, Will you, or will you not?"

"How can I take you?" replied the priest; "you know well that I have a wife already." Whereupon the gruff bass voice answered, with mocking laughter: "Ha! ha! ha! what matter for that? Take more wives!"

Here some of the young novices laughed, but others who had never wept *his dato*, now broke out in violent weeping, and the abbess exclaimed: "Oh, merciful God! who hath ever heard the like from this our chaste sister, whom we have known from her youth up! Oh! deliver her from this wicked devil, who reigns in her soul and members!"

But at the mention of the Holy name, the evil one raged more furiously than ever within her. He tore her, so that she foamed at the mouth, and—ah! woe is me that I must speak it—uttered coarse and shameful words, such as the most shameless groom or jack-boy would scarce pronounce.

These sent all the novices flying and screaming away, but the abbess remained with some of the nuns, also the priest, who prepared now to exorcise the devil with the most powerful conjurations; yet ere he began, a strange thing happened; for the possessed maiden became suddenly quite still, all her members relaxed, and her eyes closed heavily as if in sleep. But it was not so, for she then began, in her own soft natural voice, to chant a hymn in *Dutch*, although they all knew she never had learned one word of that language. The words were these:—

"Oh, chaste Jesu! all whose being
Was so lovely to our seeing,
Thoughts and speech, and soul and senses,
Filled with noblest evidences.

"Oh! the God that dwelt in thee,
In his sinless purity!
Oh, Christ Immanuel,
Save me from the sinner's hell!

"Make my soul with power divine,
Chaste and holy, ev'n as Thine!"

Then she added in her own tongue: "Ah! ye must pray much, before this devil is cast out of me. But still pray, pray diligently, and it will be done.

"Guard, Lord Christ, our deepest slumber,
Evil thoughts may come in dreams;
And the senses list the murmur,
Though the frail form sleeping seems.

"Oh! if thy hand do not keep us
Even in sleep, from passion's flame,
Though our eyes close on temptation,
We may fall to sin and shame!

Amen.

"Yes, yes, oh, pray for me; be not weary, her judgment is pronounced."

"What mean you?" spake the abbess, "whose judgment hath been pronounced?"

Illa.—"Know you not, then? Sidonia's."

Hæc.—"How could she have bewitched you? She is far from here."

Illa.—"Spirits know no distance."

Hæc.—"How then hath she done this?"

Illa.—"Her spirit Chim summoned another spirit last evening, who entered into me as I gasped for air, after that strife between you and your maid, for I was shocked to hear this faithful creature called a thief."

Hæc.—"And is she not a thief?"

Illa.—"In no wise. She is as innocent as a new-born child."

Hæc.—"But there was no one else in the chamber when I laid down my purse, and when she went away it was gone."

Illa.—"Ah! your dog Watcher was there, and the purse was made of calf's-skin, greased with your hands; for you had been rolling butter, so the dog swallowed it, having got no dinner. Kill the dog, therefore, and you will find your purse."

Hæc.—"For the love of Heaven! how know you ought of my rolling butter?"

Illa.—"A beautiful form like an angel sits at my head, and whispers all to me."

Hæc.—“That must be the devil, who has gone out of thee, for fear of the priest.”

Illa.—“Oh, no! He sits under my liver. See!—there is the angel again! Ha! how terribly his eyes are flashing!”

Hæc.—“Canst thou see, then? Thine eyes are close shut,” (opening Dorothea’s eyes by force, but the pupil is not to be seen, only the white.)

Illa.—“I see, but not through the eyes—through the stomach.”

Hæc.—“What? Thou canst see through the stomach?”

Illa.—“Ay, truly! I can see everything: there is Anna Apenborg peeping under the bed; now she lets the quilt drop in fright. Is it not so?”

The abbess clasps her hands together, looks at the priest in astonishment, and cries: “For the love of God, tell me what does all this betoken?”

To which the priest answers: “My reason is overwhelmed here, and I might almost believe what the ancients pretended, and Cornelius Agrippa also maintained, that two *Dæmones* or spirits attend each man from infancy to the grave; and that each spirit strives to blend himself with the mortal, and make the human being like unto himself, whether it be for good or evil.*

“However, I esteem this apparition to be truly Satan, who has changed himself into an angel of light to deceive more easily, as is his wont; therefore, as this our poor

* Cornelius Agrippa, of the noble race of Nettersheim, natural philosopher, jurist, physician, soldier, necromancer, and professor of the black art—in fine, learned in all natural and supernatural wisdom, closed his restless life at Grenoble, 1535. His principal work, from which the above is quoted (cap. xx.), is entitled *De Occulta Philosophia*. That Socrates had an attendant spirit or demon from his youth up, whose suggestions he followed as an oracle, is known to us from the *Theages* of Plato. But of the nature of this genius, spirit, or voice, we have no certain indications from the ancients, though the subject has been much investigated in numerous writings, beginning with the monographs of Apulejus and Plutarch. The first (Apulejus) *De Deo Socratis*, makes the strange assertion, that it was a common thing with the Pythagoreans to have such a spirit; so much so, that if any among them declared he had *not* one, it was deemed strange and singular.

sister hath also a prophesying spirit, like that maiden mentioned, Acts xvi. 16, let us do even as St. Paul, and conjure it to leave her. But first, it would be advisable to see if she hath spoken truth respecting the dog."

So my dog was killed, and there in truth was the purse of gold found in his stomach, to the wonderment of all, and the great joy of the poor damsel who had been accused of stealing it. Immediately after, the poor possessed one turned herself on the couch, sighed, opened her eyes, and asked: "Where am I?" for she knew nothing at all of what she had uttered during her sleep, and only complained of a weakness through her entire frame.* After this, the evil spirit left her in peace for two days, and every one hoped that he had gone out of her, but on the third day he began to rage within the unfortunate maiden worse than ever, so that they had to send quickly for the priest to exorcise him. But behold, as he entered in his surplice, and uttered the salutation, "The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon this maid," the evil spirit with the man's coarse voice, cried out of poor Dorothea's mouth:—

* That poor Dorothea was in the somnambulistic state (according to our phraseology) is evident. A similar instance in which the demoniac passed over into the magnetic state is given by Kerner, *History of Possession*, p. 73. I must just remark here, that Kieser (*System of Tellurism*) is probably in error, when he asserts, from the attitudes discovered amongst some of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, that the ancients were acquainted with the mode of producing the magnetic state by manipulation or passes, for *Jamblichus* enumerates all the modes known to the ancients of producing the divining crisis, in his book *De Mysteriis Ægyptiorum*, in the chapter, *Insuperatas vacat ab actione propria*, page 58, and never mentions manipulation amongst them, of which mode, indeed, Mesmer seems to have been the original discoverer. The ancients, too, were aware (as we are) that the magnetic and divining state can be produced only in young and somewhat simple (*simpliciores*) persons. Porphyry confirms this in his remarkable letter to the Egyptian priest of Anubis (to which I earnestly direct the attention of our physiologists) in which he asks, "Wherefore it happens that only simple (*ἀπλουτέρους καὶ νέους*) and young persons were fitted for divination?" (yet there were many even then, as we learn from *Jamblich*, and the later *Psellus*) who maintained the modern rationalistic view, that all these phenomena were produced only by a certain condition of our own spiritual and bodily nature; although all somnambulists affirm the contrary, and declare they are the result of external spiritual influences working upon them.

"Come here, parson, I'll soon settle for you."

Then it cursed, swore, and blasphemed God, and raged within the poor maiden, so that the foam gathered on her pale lips. But the Reverend David is not to be frightened from his duty by the foul fiend. He kneeled down first, with all present, and prayed earnestly to God; then endeavoured to make the possessed maiden repeat the Lord's prayer, and the creed after him, but the devil would not let her. He raged, roared, laughed scornfully, and abused the priest with such unseemly words, that it was a grief and horror to hear them.

"Wait, parson," it screamed, "in three days thou shalt be as I am. (Namely, a spirit; though no one knew then what the devil meant). I will make thee pay for this, because thou tormentest me."

But neither menaces nor blasphemies could deter the good priest. He lifted his eyes to heaven, and prayed that beautiful prayer from the Pomeranian liturgy, page 244, which he had by heart—

"Oh, Lord Jesu Christ, thou Son of the living God, at whose name every knee must bend, in heaven, upon the earth, and under the earth; God and man; our Saviour, our brother, our Redeemer; who hast conquered sin, and death, and hell, trod on the devil's head and destroyed his works—thou hast promised, thou Holy Saviour, 'that whatever we ask the Father in thy name, thou wilt grant unto us.' Therefore, by that holy promise, we pray thee, Lord Christ, to look with pity upon this our sister, who hath been baptised in thy Holy Name, redeemed by thy precious blood, washed from all sin, anointed by thy Holy Spirit, and made one with thee, a member of the living temple of thy body. Relieve her from the tyranny and power of the devil; graciously cast out this unclean spirit, that so thy holy name may be praised and glorified, for ever and ever. Amen."

Then he laid his hand upon the sick maiden's head, while the hellish fiend raged and roared more furiously than ever, so that all present were seized with trembling, and exclaimed—

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the

strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, I bid, desire, and command thee, thou unclean spirit, to come forth and give place to the Holy Spirit of God! Amen."

Whereupon the convulsions ceased in the sick maiden's limbs, and she sank down gently on her bed, as a sail falls when the cords are loosed and the wind ceases; and thus she lay for a long time quite still.

After which, she said in her own natural voice—

"Now I see him no more!"

"Who is it that you see no more?" asked the abbess.

Illa.—"The evil spirit, my angel says. He has gone forth from me. Woe, woe, alas!"

Hæc.—"Why dost thou cry, alas, when he has in truth gone out from thee?"

Illa.—"My angel says, he will first strangle the priest who has cast him forth, then will he return, as it is written in the Scripture, Matthew xi. 24, 'After three days I will return to my house from which I had gone forth.' Ah, look! the good priest is growing pale. But let him be comforted, for he shall have his reward in heaven, as the Lord saith, Matthew v."

Hæc.—"But why does the great God permit such power to the devil, if what thou sayest be true?"

Illa is silent.

Hæc.—"Thou art silent; what says thy angel?"

Illa.—"He is silent also—now he speaks again."

Hæc.—"What says he then?"

Illa.—"The wisdom of God is silent."

The abbess repeats the words, while the priest falls back against the wall, as white as chalk, and exclaims—

"Your angel is right. I feel as if a mouse were running up and down through my body. Alas! now the bones of my chest are breaking. Farewell, dear sisters; in heaven we shall meet again. Farewell; pray for me. I go to lay my head upon my death-pillow."

And he was scarcely gone out at the door, when a great cry and weeping arose amongst the sisters present, and the abbess asked, weeping, likewise—

"Is this, too, Sidonia's work?"

Illa.—“Whose else? She hath never forgiven him because he rejected her love, and hath only delayed his death to a fitting opportunity.”

Hæc.—“Merciful God! and will this murderous nun be brought to judgment?”

Illa.—“Yes, when her hour comes, she will be burned and beheaded—not many years after this.”

Hæc.—“And what will become of you? Will you die, if Satan often takes up his dwelling-place in your heart?”

Illa.—“If you do not prevent him, I shall die; if he leave me, I shall grow well.”

Hæc.—“What can we, miserable mortals, do to prevent him?”

Illa.—“Jobst Bork of Saatzig has three rings, which the spirits made, and gave to his grandmother in Pansin. Item, he has also a beautiful daughter called Diliana, and as no second on earth bears her name,* so is there no other who equals her in goodness, piety, humility, chastity, and courage. If this Diliana lays one of the rings on my stomach, in the name of God, the devil can no more enter in me, and I shall be healed. But what do I see?—there she comes herself.”

Hæc.—“Who comes?”

Illa.—“Diliana. She has run away from her father, and will offer herself as servant to Sidonia, because old Wolde is sick.”

Hæc.—“She must be foolish then, if this be true.”

Illa.—“Ay, she is foolish, but it is from pure love, which indeed is a godlike folly; for Sidonia hath bewitched her poor father, and he grows worse and worse, and her prayers

* In fact, I have nowhere else met with the name “Diliana,” whereas that of “Sidonia” is by no means uncommon. Virgil calls this “Sidonia” (*Æn.* 1, v. 446), with somewhat of poetic license, for she was not born in Sidon but in Tyre. About the time of the reformation this name became very common in the regal houses. For example, King George of Bohemia, Duke Henry of Saxony, Duke Ernst of Westphalia, and others, had daughters called “Sidonia.” In the same manner, therefore, the proud knight of Stramehl probably gave the same name to his daughter. In the middle ages I find only one *Sidonia* or *Sitavia*, the spouse of Count Manfred of Xingelheim, who lived in the town of Zittau, and died in the year 1021.

to the sorceress are of no avail to help him, so she hath privately left her father's castle, to offer herself as servant to Sidonia; for no wench, far or near, will be found who will take old Wolde's place, and she hopes, in return for this, that the sorceress will give her something from her herbal to cure her old father. Ha! what do I see? How her beautiful hair streams behind her upon the wind! How she runs like a deer over the heather, and looks back often, for her heart is trembling lest her father might send after her. Now she enters the wood; see, she kneels down, and prays for her father and for herself, that God will keep her steps. Let us pray also, dear sisters, for her, for the poor priest, and for the unfortunate maiden."

Whereupon they all fell upon their knees, and the possessed virgin offered up so beautiful a prayer that none had ever heard the like before, and every face was bedewed with tears. After which she awoke, and, as the first time, remembered nothing whatever of what had passed, or of what she had uttered.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE ARRIVAL OF DILIANA AND THE DEATH OF THE CONVENT PRIEST; ITEM, HOW THE UNFORTUNATE CORPSE IS TORN BY A WOLF.

SCARCELY had the abbess returned to her apartment when Diliana sprang in, with flowing hair, and her beautiful blooming face looking like a rose sprinkled with morning dew. So the worthy matron screamed first with wonder that all should be true, then taking the lovely young maiden in her arms, pressed her to her heart, and asked—

"Wherefore comest thou here, my beloved Diliana?"

Illa.—"I have run away from my father, good mother, and will serve my cousin Sidonia Bork as her waiting-maid, hoping, that in return, she will give him something out of her herbal to heal his poor frame, which is distracted day and night with pain, even as she healed you and Sheriff Sparling; and she will do this, I am sure, because

I hear that her maid Anne Wolde is sick, and no one in all the country round will take service with her, they say."

Hæc.—"Poor child, thou knowest not what thou dost. She will slay thee, or ill-treat thee in her wickedness, or may be bring some worse evil than either on thee."

Illa.—"And I will do as the Lord commanded—if she strike me on one cheek I will turn to her the other also, whereby she will be softened, and consent to help my poor father."

Hæc.—"She will help him in nothing, and then how wilt thou bear the disgrace of servitude?"

Illa.—"Disgrace? If the soul suffer not disgrace, the body, methinks, can suffer it never."

Hæc.—"But how canst thou do the duties of a serving-wench? Thou, brought up the lady of a castle!"

Illa.—"I have learned everything privately from Lisette; trust me, I can feed the pigs and sheep, milk the cow, and wash the dishes, &c."

Hæc.—"But what put it into thy head, child, to serve her as a maid?"

Illa.—"When I last entreated my cousin Sidonia to help my poor father, she said—'Get me a good maid who will do my business well, and then I shall see what can be done to help him. Now, as no one will take service with her, what else can I do, but play the trencher-woman myself, and thus save my poor father's life?'"

Hæc.—"Thou hast saved it once before, as I have heard."

Illa is silent.

Hæc.—"How was it? Tell me, that I may see if they told me the story truly."

Illa.—"Ah, good mother, speak no more of it. It was as you have heard, no doubt."

Hæc.—"People say that a horse threw your father, dragged him along, and attempted to kick him, upon which, while all the men-folk stood and gaped, you flew like the wind, seized the bridle of the animal, and held him fast till he was up again."

Hæc.—"Well, mother, there was nothing very wonderful

Hæc.—“Also, they tell that one day at the hunt, you came upon a part of the wood where two robbers were beating a noble almost to death, after having plundered him. You sprang forward, menaced them, and finally made them take to their heels, after which you helped the poor wounded man upon your own palfrey, like a good Samaritan indeed, and without thought of the danger or fatigue, walked beside him, leading the horse by the bridle until clear out of the wood, and thus—”

Illa.—“Ah, good mother, do not make me more red than I am; for know, the poor wounded noble thought so much of what I had done, that he must needs ask me for his bride, though truly I would have done the like for a beggar.”

Hæc.—“Then it was George Putkammer, and thou wilt not have him?”

Illa.—“I may say with Sara, Tobias iii.; ‘Thou knowest, Lord, that I have desired no man, and have kept my soul pure from all evil lusts;’ but indeed to save my father’s life is more to me than a bridegroom. A bridegroom may be offered many times in life to a young thing like me, but a father comes never again.”

Hæc.—“God grant that thou mayest save him, but never tell thy cousin Sidonia of George Putkammer’s love, else, methinks, it will be all over with thee.”

Illa.—“But if she ask me, I cannot lie unto her—”

Just then the cry was heard, “The priest is dying;” whereupon the abbess, Diliانا, indeed the whole convent, rushed out to visit him at the glebe-house. The priest, however, was dead when they arrived, and his corpse had the same signature of Satan as the others who died before him, save only that his right hand was uplifted, and had stiffened into the same position in which he held it when he exorcised the evil spirit out of Dorothea.

So they all stood around pale and trembling, while they listened to his poor widow telling how his breast-bone rose up higher and higher, until at length he died in horrible agony.

But, behold, the door flies open, and Sidonia, who had just returned from her long journey, enters, with her long

black habit trailing after her through the chamber. Whereupon they all become dumb with horror and disgust, and stand there like so many marble or enchanted figures.

"Ah, what is this I hear," exclaimed the accursed sorceress, "just on my return home? Is the worthy and upright man really dead? Woe! alas, that I could have saved him from this! How did it happen? Thank God that I was not here at the time, or the wicked world, which lays all manner of crimes upon me falsely, might have accused me of this likewise. Yes, I thank God a thousand times that I was absent! Speak, poor Barbara! how did it happen that your dear spouse fell so suddenly ill?"

But the poor wife only trembled, and sank powerless against the bed where the corpse of her husband lay stretched; for when Sidonia advanced close to it, the red blood oozed from the mouth of the dead man, as if to accuse his murderess before God and man.

And no one could speak a word, not even a sob was heard in answer to her questions; whereupon the sorceress spake again:—

"Alas, what is all this which has happened in my absence! Good Dorothea, they tell me, is possessed by a devil; but, at least, people can see now that I am as innocent as a new-born infant; though, assuredly, some terrible sinner must be lurking amongst us, though we know it not, or all this judgment would not come upon the convent. I would not willingly condemn any Christian soul, but, if I err not, the old dairy-woman is the person!"

This she said from revenge, because the woman had refused to give her seven cheeses for a florin, when she was on her way to Stettin. Of the misfortunes which grew out of these same cheeses for the poor dairy-woman, we shall hear more in due time.

At this horrible hypocrisy and falsehood the abbess could no longer hold her peace, and cried, "In my opinion, sister, you err much; the old dairy-mother is a pious and honest woman, as all the convent can testify, and attended diligently on our dead pastor here to be catechised."

Illa.—"Who, then, else? It was incomprehensible. A thousand times thank God that she had been away during

it all. Now they must hold their tongues, they who had blackened her to the Prince; but his Grace had done her justice, and dismissed her honourably from the trial at Stettin."

Hæc.—"I have a different version of the story; for his Highness has commanded you to resign the sub-prioret to Dorothea Stettin forthwith—item, you are to be kept close within the convent walls, for which purpose I shall order the great padlock to be placed again upon the gates. Thus his Grace commands; and as we have a chapter assembled here already, I may announce the resolve with all due form."

Illa.—"What! you tell me this, in the presence of the priest's wife and your serving-wench? Do they belong to the chapter of noble virgins? I shall forward a *protocolum* to his Highness, setting forth all that has happened in my absence, and get all the sisterhood to sign it, that the Duke may know what kind of folk the abbess summons to her chapter; but as touching the sub-prioret, it is well known to you all how it was forced upon me by Dorothea, as I fully explained to the princes in council; however, speak, sisters, if ye indeed wish this light silly creature, this devil-possessed Dorothea Stettin, for your sub-prioress again, take her and welcome—I will not prevent you. She can teach you all the shameful words which, as I hear, flow so liberally from her lips—eh, sisters, will ye have the wanton or not?"

And when the nuns all cried "No, no!" the accursed witch went on:—

"Well, then, I bid ye all to assemble instantly in my apartment, to testify the same to his Highness; also to bear witness of the evil deeds done in my absence, for that the poor priest has died no natural death, is evident; therefore his Grace, I trust, will probe the business to the uttermost, and find out who is the evil Satan amongst us—ay, and tear off the deceitful mask, that my good name thereby may be justified before the Prince and the whole world."

Diliana now stepped forward from amidst a crowd of serving-women, among whom she had concealed herself, and bowed low in salutation to Sidonia; but the witch laughed

An hour after, the poor widow went into the church, to see if the blood yet flowed from the mouth of her dear murdered husband. But what sees she?—the corpse is lying on its face in the coffin in place of on its back, she calls the dairy-mother in, trembling with horror, and they turn him between them. Then they go forth, but return in a little while again, and see, the corpse is again turned upon its face. And no one is able to comprehend how the corpse can turn of itself, or be turned by any one, for the widow has one key of the church and the abbess has the other, therefore the poor wife, simple as she is, resolves to hide herself in the church for the night, and light the altar candles, that she might see how it happened that the corpse turned in the coffin. And the dairy-mother agreed to watch with her; item, Anna Apenborg, who heard the story from them; item, Diliانا, for as Sidonia had no bed to give her, the young maiden had gone to sleep with Anna, and there the priest's maid told them of the horrible way her poor master's corpse had turned in the coffin. So the weeping widow let them all watch with her gladly, for she feared to be alone, but warned them to speak no word, lest the evil-doer, whoever it might be, should perceive them, and keep away. There was no man within call, either, to help them, for the porter had gone away to Stettin; so they four, after commending themselves to God, went secretly into the church at ten of the clock, laid the corpse right upon its back, and lit candles round it, as the custom is. Item; they lit the candles on the altar, and then hid themselves in the dark confession-box, which lay close by the altar, and from which they could see the coffin perfectly.

After waiting for an hour or more, sighing and weeping, and when the hour-glass which they had brought with them, showed it was the twelfth hour—hark! there was a noise in the coffin that made them all start to their feet, and at the same instant the private door of the nuns' choir opened gently, and something came down the steps of the gallery, step by step, on to the coffin, and the blood now froze in their veins, for they perceived that it was a wolf; and he laid his paws upon the corpse, and began to tear it.

At this sight the poor widow screamed aloud, whereupon

the wolf sprang back and attempted to make off, but Diliانا bounded on its track, crying, "A wolf! a wolf!" and seeing upon the altar an old tin crucifix, which some of the workmen who had been opening the vault had brought up from below, she seized it and pursued the wolf out of the great gate into the church-yard, while the rest followed screaming. And as the wolf ran fast, and made for the graves, as if to hide itself, the daring virgin not being able to get near enough to strike it, flung the crucifix at the unclean beast, when lo! the wolf suddenly disappeared, and nothing was to be seen but Sidonia in the clear moonlight, standing trembling beside a grave.

"Good Cousin!" exclaimed Diliانا in horror, "where has the wolf gone? we were pursuing a wolf." Upon which the horrible and accursed night-raven recovered herself quickly, and pointing with her finger to the crucifix which lay upon the ground, said with a tone of mingled scorn and anger: "There, thou stupid fool! he sank beneath that cross!"

The poor innocent child believed her, and ran forward to pick up the crucifix, looking in every direction around for the wolf; but the others, who were wiser, saw full well that the wolf had been none other than Sidonia herself, for her lips were bloody, and round them like a beard, were sticking small black threads, which were indeed from the black silk hose of the poor corpse. And when they looked at her horrible mouth they trembled, but were silent from fear; all except the inquisitive Anna Apenborg, who asked; "Dear sister, what makes you here at midnight in the church-yard?"

Here the horrible witch-demon mastered her anger, and answered in a melancholy plaintive tone, "Ah, good sister Anna! I had a miserable tooth-ache, so that I could not sleep, and I just crept down here into the fresh air, thinking it might do me good. But what are you all doing here by night in the church-yard?"

No one replied; indeed she seemed not to care for an answer, but put up her kerchief to her horrible and traitorous mouth, and turned away whimpering. The others, however, went back to the church, where the corpse truly lay

upon its back as they had left it, but the hose were rent at the knee, and the flesh torn and bloody.

How can I tell now of the poor widow's screams and tears?

Summa.—The corpse was buried the next day, and as no man had been a witness of the night-scene, only the weeping women, no one would believe their strange story, neither on the last trial would the judges even credit so wild a tale as that Sidonia could change herself into a wolf, and pronounced as their opinion, that fear must have made the women blind, or distracted their heads, and that no doubt a real wolf had attacked the corpse, which was by no means a strange or unusual occurrence. (But I have my own opinion on the subject, and many who read this will think differently from the judges, I warrant.”

For no more horrible vengeance could have been devised by Beelzebub himself, the chief of the devils, than this of the she-wolf Sidonia Bork (for Bork means wolf in the Gothic tongue), to revenge herself on the priest because he disdained her love. But why and wherefore the unfortunate corpse was found so often turned upon its face, that I cannot explain, and it must ever remain a mystery, I think. However, I shall pass on now to other matters, for truly we have had enough of these disgusting-horrors.*

* One of the most inveterately rooted of our superstitions is this belief in the existence of man-wolves. Ovid mentions it in his *Lycæon*, and even Herodotus. Many modern examples are given in Dr. Weggand's natural history, which book I recommend to all lovers of the marvellous, for they will find much in it which far surpasses what we have related above concerning Sidonia. The belief in a vampire, which Lord Byron has clothed with his genius, belongs to the same order of superstitions. And Horst, in his magic library, furnishes some very curious remarks concerning it. Even Luther himself believed in the possibility of such existences.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW JOBST BORK HAS HIMSELF CARRIED TO MARIENFLIESS IN HIS BED, TO RECLAIM HIS FAIR YOUNG DAUGHTER DILIANA; ITEM, HOW GEORGE PUTKAMMER THREATENS SIDONIA WITH A DRAWN SWORD.

Now Jobst Bork of Saatzig had but this one daughter, the fair Diliana, whom he loved ten times more than his life; and no sooner had he heard of her flight than he guessed readily whither, and for what cause, she had flown; for, that day and night her thoughts were bent on how to help him, he knew well; also, the teachings of old Lisa were not unknown to him. So he resolved to go and seek her, and sent for twelve peasants to carry him, as he was, in his bed, to Marienfliess, for his limbs were so contracted from gout, that he could neither ride, walk, nor stand.

Accordingly, next morning early, the twelve peasants bearing the couch on which lay the poor knight, entered the great gate of the convent, and they set down the bed, by command of the knight, just beneath Sidonia's window. Whereupon the miserable father stretched forth his right hand, and cried out, as loud as he was able, "Sidonia Bork, I conjure you by the Living God, give me my child again!"

Three times he repeated this adjuration. So we may imagine how the whole convent ran together to see who was there. Anna Apenborg and Diliana were, however, not amongst them, for they had been up late watching by the corpse, and were still fast asleep; item, Sidonia, I think, was snoring likewise, for she never appeared, until at last she threw up the window, half-dressed, and screamed out, "What wants the cursed knave? Hath the devil possessed you, Jobst, in earnest? Good people, take the fellow to Dorothea's cell—they are fit company for one another!"

But the knight again stretched forth his trembling arm from the bed, and repeated his adjuration solemnly, using the same words.

At this, Sidonia's face glowed with anger; and, seizing her broom-stick, she rushed out of the room, down the steps, and into the court-yard, while her long, thin, white hair flew wildly about her face and shoulders, and her red eyes glared like two red coals in her head. (I have omitted to notice, that this horrible Satan's hag had long since got his signature in her red eyes; for, as the slaves of vice are known by their ash-pale colour, and the *black* circle round their eyes, so the slaves of Satan are known by the *red* circle.) But when the evil witch reached the spot where the sick knight lay on his bed, and saw the crowd standing round him, she changed her demeanour, and, leaning on the broom-stick, exclaimed, "Methinks, Jobst, you are mad; and you and your daughter ought to be put at once into a mad-house; for, judge all of ye who stand here round us, how unjustly I am accused. Yesterday, this man's daughter comes to me, and says she will play my serving-wench, if I promise to cure her father; just as if I were the Lord God, and could heal sickness as I willed; but I refused to take her, as was meet; and the whole convent can testify this of me; when, see now, here comes this fool of a father, and, taking the Lord's name in vain, demands his daughter of me, though I never had her, nor detained her; and she can go this moment whither she likes, as ye all know."

Hereupon the abbess herself advanced to the bed, and spake: "In truth you err, Sir Knight. Sidonia hath refused to accept your daughter's service! But here comes the fair maiden herself—ask her if it is not so."

And Diliانا, who had thrown on her clothes in haste, and ran with Anna out of her cell, sprang forward, and fell sobbing upon her father's bosom, who sobbed likewise, and cries, in an agitated voice, "God be thanked, I have thee again; now I shall die happy! Ah! silly child, how couldst thou run away from me! Dearest!—my heart's dearest!—my own joy-giving Diliانا! ah, leave me not *again* before I die;—it will not be long, perhaps."

Here the weeping of the peasants interrupted him, for they loved the good knight dearly, and the rude boors sobbed, and blew their noses, in great affliction, like so many children. But the knight was too proud to beg a cure from Sidonia; he would rather die—better death than humiliation. So he spake: “Children, lift me up again, in the name of God, and bear me home; and thou, my Diliانا, walk thou by my side, sweet girl, that my eyes may not lose thee for an instant.”

So the peasants lifted up the bed again on their shoulders; but Diliانا exclaimed, “Wait, ah, my heart’s dearest father, you do our good cousin Sidonia sore injustice. Only think, she has promised to cure you, without any recompense at all! Is it not true, dear cousin? Set the bed down again, good vassals! Is it not true, dear cousin?”

As she thus spoke, and kissed the claws of the horrible hell-wolf with her beautiful bright lips, such an expression of rage and unutterable hatred passed over Sidonia’s face, that all, even the peasants, shuddered with horror, and nearly let the bed fall from their trembling hands; but the fair young girl was unaware of it, for she was bending down upon the hand of the evil sorceress.

However, my hag soon composed herself; and no doubt, fearing the vengeance of Duke Francis, or hoping perhaps to cover her evil deeds by this one public act of charity, and so gain a good name before the world, and the fair opinion of their Highnesses, to whom she had written the day previous, she rested her arm once more upon the broom-stick, and turning to the crowd, thus spake:—

“Ye shall see now that Sidonia hath a truly Christian heart in her bosom; for, by the help of God, I will try and heap coals of fire upon mine enemy’s head. Yes, he is mine enemy. None have persecuted me more than he and his race, though, God be good to me, it is my own race likewise. His false father was the first to malign me, and yet more guilty was his still falser mother; but God punished her hypocrisy with a just judgment, for she died in childbirth of him, so true is it what the Scripture says, ‘The Lord abhors both the blaspheamous and deceitful man.’ Ah,

she was deceitful beyond all I have met with upon earth—also, this her son, the false Clara's son, hath made my nephew, Otto of Stramehl, in a traitorous and unknightly manner, give him up my two farm-houses at Zachow, and he now refuses to restore me either my farms or the rents thereto belonging."

Here Jobst cried out, "'Tis false, Sidonia! I shall say nothing of thy statements respecting my parents, for all who knew them testify that they were righteous and honourable their life long, therefore let them rest in their graves; but as touching thy farm-houses, thou shalt have them back, as I have already written to thee. The accumulated rents, however, thou canst not have, for it were a strange and unjust thing, truly, to demand fifty years' rent from me, who have only been in possession of the farms for half a year."

"What! thou unjust knave," screamed Sidonia, furiously; but then suddenly strangled the wrath in her throat with a convulsion, as if a wolf were gulping a bone, and continued: "It may be a hard struggle to help one of thy name, but I remember the words of my heavenly bridegroom (oh, that the horrible blasphemy did not choke her), 'I say unto you, love your enemies; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you;' and so, Jobst Bork, I will do good to thee out of my herbal, if the merciful God will assist my efforts, as I hope."

Then she turned her hypocritical Satanic eyes up to heaven, sighed, and, stepping to the bed, murmured some words; then asked, "How is it with thee now, Jobst? is there ease already?"

"Oh, yes, good cousin," he answered,—“I am better, much better, thanks, good cousin! Lift me up again, children, and bear me homeward—I thank thee, cousin!” and with these words he was borne out of the convent gates, the fair young Dilliana following him closely; and scarcely had they left the town and reached the moor, when the knight called out from the bed,—“Oh, it is true, my own dear daughter—praise be to God, I am indeed better; but I am
sunk back almost immediately into a deep sleep,

which continued till they reached the castle of Saatzig, and the bearers laid the bed down again in its old place in the knight's chamber—still he woke not.

Then Diliaua kneeled down beside him, and thanked the Lord with burning tears; sprang up again quickly, and bade them saddle her palfrey, for she must ride away, but would return again before a couple of hours. If her father woke up in the mean time, let them say he must not be uneasy, for that she would return soon and tell him herself whither, and on what errand, she had been.

Hereupon she went to a large cabinet that stood in her father's chamber, took out a little casket containing three golden rings, mounted her palfrey, and rode back with all speed on the road to Marienfiess. But I must here relate how these magic golden rings came into possession of the family; the tradition runs as follows:—

A long while ago the castle of Pansin, which had originally belonged to the Knights Templars, became a fief of the Bork family, and the count, who was then in possession, went to the wars in the Holy Land, leaving his fair young wife alone in her sorrow; and, lo! one night, as she was weeping bitterly, a spirit appeared in her chamber, and motioned her to rise from bed and follow him to the castle garden. But she was horror-struck, and crept trembling under the quilt. Next night the ghost again stood by her bed, made the same gestures even menacingly, but she was frightened, and hid her head beneath the clothes.

The third night brought the ghost likewise; but this time the fair lady took courage, rose from bed, and followed him in silence down the steps into the castle garden, on to a small island, where the two streams, the Ihua and the Krampehl, meet. Here there was a large fire, and around it many spirits were seated. Hereupon her ghost spake:—

“Fear nothing, but fill thy apron with coals from the fire, and return to the castle; but, I warn thee, do not look back.”

The fair chatelain did as she was desired, filled her apron, and returned to the castle; but all the way, close behind her, there was a terrible uproar, and the rushing and roaring as of many people. However, she never looked

back, only on reaching the castle gates she thought she might take one peep round just as she was closing them; but, lol instantly her apron was rent, and the coals fell hither and thither on the ground, and out of all she could only save three pieces, with which she rushed on to her own apartment, never again looking behind her, though the uproar continued close to her very heels all the way up to her chamber door; and trembling with dread, and commending herself to all the saints, she at last threw herself on her bed once more in safety. But next morning, on looking for the coals, she found three golden rings in their stead bearing strange inscriptions, which no man hath been able to decipher until this day. As to those she had dropped at the castle gate, they were nowhere to be seen; and on the fourth night the ghost comes again, and scolds her for disobeying his orders, but admonishes her to preserve the three rings safely, for if she lost one, a great misfortune would fall upon the village, and the castle be rent violently—item, but two of her race would ever be alive at the same time. If the second were lost, her race would be reduced to direct poverty; and if the third ring were lost, the race would disappear entirely from the earth.

After this, when her knightly spouse returned from Jerusalem, and she told him the wonderful story of the three rings, he had a costly casket made for them, in which they were safely locked, with a rose of Jericho placed above them, which he had himself brought from the Holy Land; and this wonderful treasure has been preserved by the count's descendants, with jealous care, even until this day. I have said that no man could read the inscriptions on the rings: they were all the same—the three as like as the leaves of a trefoil. They were all large enough for the largest man's thumb, and made of the purest crown gold: the shield was of a circular form, bearing in the centre the figure of a Knight Templar in full armour, with spur and shield, keeping watch before the temple at Jerusalem; but what the characters around the figure signified I leave unsaid, and many, I am thinking, will leave unsaid likewise.*

* It is a fact, that no one up to the present time has been able to decipher this very remarkable inscription, not even Silvestre de Sacy

In summa.—When Diliaua arrived with these rings, the poor Dorothea lay again in the devil's fetters. She roared, and screamed, and raged horribly, and tore her bed-clothes, and foamed at the mouth, and even abused and reviled the beautiful young virgin, who took, however, no heed thereof, but with permission of the abbess laid the three rings upon the stomach of the sick nun, who immediately became quite still, and so lay for a little while, after which, with a loud roar, Satan went out of her, while the windows clattered and the glasses rang upon the table. Then she fell into a deep sleep, and on awakening remembered nothing of what had happened, but seeing Diliaua prepared to set out on her homeward ride, asked with wonder, who is this strange young maiden, and what does she here.

After this, as I may as well briefly notice here, Dorothea became quite well, and, by the mercy of God remained for ever after untouched by the demon claws of the great enemy of mankind.

Meanwhile, the good Diliaua felt it to be her duty to descend to the refectory, and thank the hell-dragon for the refreshing sleep which her father Jobst had obtained by her means. But, ah! how does she find my dragon? Her eyes shoot fire and flame, and in an instant she flew at poor Diliaua, on the subject of marriage—

"What! she wanted to marry too! She was scarcely out of school, and yet already was thinking about marriage!"

"Good cousin," answered the other, "I have indeed no thoughts of marriage, and no desire for it has ever entered my heart."

himself, to whom it was sent some years ago. Dreger's reading, given in Dähnert's Pomeranian Library, iv. p. 295, is manifestly wrong—*Ordo Hierosolymitanus*. But two of the rings are forthcoming now; and, in fulfilment of the tradition, a tremendous rent really followed the loss of the first in the old castle of Pansin, which may yet be seen in this fine ruin, whose like is not to be found in all Pomerania, nor, indeed, in the north of Germany. The two remaining rings, with the rose of Jericho, are still to be seen in the original casket, which is of curious and costly workmanship, and this casket is again enclosed in another of iron, with strong hoops and clasps. Should any of my readers desire to discover the meaning of the inscription, he will do me the highest favour by communicating the same to me.

"What!" screamed my dragon; "you lie to me, child! The whole convent talks of it; and Anna Apenborg herself told me that you are betrothed to that beardless boy George Putkammer. Fiel a fellow without a beard."

Hereupon she began to spit out. But George Putkammer that instant clattered up the steps; for the news had come to Pansin, of which castle Jobst Bork had made him castellan, seeing that he set much store by the brave young knight, and would willingly have had him for his son-in-law, if his fair little daughter Diliaua had not resisted his entreaties, *bis dato*; the news came, I say, now that Diliaua had run away from her father, and gone to play the serving-wench to Sidonia. So the knight seized his good sword, and went forth, like another Perseus to save his Andromeda, and deliver her from the dragon, even if his own life were to pay the cost. He knew not that the damning dragon despised the service of the mild innocent girl, nor that Jobst Bork had gone to offer himself as a sacrifice in her place.

So he clattered up the steps, dashed open the door, and finding Sidonia in the very act of spitting out, he drew his sword, and roared—

"Dare to touch even a finger of that angel beside thee, and thy black toad's blood shall rust upon this sword."

And when Sidonia started back alarmed, he continued—

"Oh, Diliaua, much loved and beautiful maiden, what does my queen here? Where have you heard that the angels of God seek help and shelter from the devil, as you have done here? Return with me to Saatzig, and, by my faith, some other means shall make this vile wretch help your poor father."

Sidonia now screamed with rage—

"What wants this silly varlet here, this beardless young profligate? Ha, youngster, thou shalt pay for thy bold, saucy tongue!"

Ille.—"Hold thy accursed mouth, or I will give thee such a blow, that thou shalt never need it again, but to groan. Listen, cursed beast of hell, and mark my words. Since our gracious Lord of Stettin handles thee so gently,

and lets thee heap evil upon evil at thine own vile will, I and another noble have sworn solemnly to rid the land from such a curse. Let it cost our lives or not, we shall avenge our country in thy blood, unless thou ceasest to work all thy diabolical wickedness. Now, therefore, hear me. Delay one instant to heal the upright Jobst and to remove thy accursed witch-spell from off him, and this sword shall take a bloody revenge; or if but a finger ache of this beautiful maiden here, thy death is certain. Think not to escape. Thou may'st lame me, like Jobst or Wedel, or murder me as others, it will not help thee; for my friend hath sworn, if such happen, that he will ride straight to Mafienfliess, and run his sword through thy body without a word. Two horses stand, day and night, ready saddled in my stall, and in a quarter of an hour we are here—he or I, it matters not, which ever is left alive, or both together, and we shall hew thee from head to foot, even as I hew this jar in two, that stands upon the table, so that human hand shall never lift it more.”

So saying, he struck the jar with his sword, when it flew into a thousand pieces, and the beer dashed over the hag's clothes, so that she raised a cry of terror, for such speech had no man ever yet dared to hold to her.

But the brave Diliانا seized hold of the young knight's sword, crying—

“For God's sake, Sir Knight, what mean you? You do my good cousin sore injustice, I have never seen you thus before. Sidonia hath declined to take me for her maid, and has helped my poor father, of her own free will, for he was here yesterday, and now rests safe in Saatzig in a deep and healthful sleep; for which cause I come hither to thank my good cousin for her kindness. Where is your justice, Sir Knight—your honour? Bethink you how often you have extolled these noble virtues yourself to me!”

As the knight listened, and heard that her father was already cured, he marvelled greatly; inquired all the particulars, but shook his head at the end, saying—

“‘A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, and figs are not to be gathered from thorns.’ That she has helped your father, I take as no sign of her kindness, but of her

see my father, come to-morrow to Saatzig, for I shall ride there alone now. Farewell!"

And off she cantered on her palfrey, hop, hop, hop, as fast as an arrow from a bow, and her red feathers gleamed through the green leaves of the forest trees, so that my Knight stood watching her, filled with as much joy as sorrow, for the maiden now seemed to him so beautiful, and he watched her as long as a glimpse of her feathers could be had through the trees, and then he listened as long as the tramp of her palfrey could be heard (for he told me this himself), then he alighted, and kneeling down, prayed to God the Lord to bless this beautiful darling of his heart, whilst he sobbed like a child, for sorrow and the sweet anguish of love. Then he rose up, and obedient to her commands, took his way back to the stately castle of Pansin.

But next morning early, he was at Saatzig, where the good Knight Jobst receives him joyfully at table, quite restored to health. Nor has aught evil happened to the beautiful Diliانا, as the knight feared from the spitting of Sidonia. However, he heard from the maiden, that after he left the refectory, Sidonia spat a second time, probably to remove the first witch-spell (for no doubt she feared the knight would hold his word, and hew her in pieces if aught evil happened to the fair young maiden). And for the rest, the knight ceased to trouble Diliانا with his solicitations, but he made father and daughter promise to give him instant notice if but a finger ached, and he would instantly find one sure way to bind the wild beast of Marienfliess for ever, namely, with his good sword.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW MY GRACIOUS LORD BISHOP FRANCISCUS AND THE REVEREND DR. JOEL GO TO THE JEWS' SCHOOL AT OLD STETTIN, IN ORDER TO STEAL THE SCHEM HAMPHORASCH, AND HOW THE ENTERPRISE FINISHES WITH A SOUND CUDGELLING.

MEANWHILE, my gracious Duke Francis was puzzling his brain, day and night, how best to bind this malicious dragon, and hinder her from utterly destroying his whole race. He

wanted to effect, by the agency of spirits, what George Putkammer had already effected by his good sword, as we have related before. So his Highness must needs send for Dr. Joel, in all haste, to Old Stettin, to ask him whether it were not possible to break the power of the evil witch by spiritual agency, for as to human, it was out of the question, since no one could be found to lay hands on her. They would as soon touch the bodily Satan himself.

Whereupon my *magister* answered, that he had already, to serve his Grace, consulted divers spirits as to what could be done in this sore strait, but none would undertake a contest with Sidonia's Spirit, which was powerful and strong, and acting in concert always with the spirit of old Wolde, had the might in himself, as it were, of two demons. For this reason they must try two modes of casting out the evil thing. The first was to exorcise the sun-spirit, according to the form in the *Clavicula Salomonis*, for he was the most powerful of all the Astral spirits, and question him as to what should be done. But for this conjuration, a pure young virgin was necessary, not merely pure in act, but in thought, in soul. Even her very garments must be woven by a virgin's hands, otherwise the holy angels, who neither marry nor are given in marriage, would not appear. For they obey only the summons of one who is as pure as themselves, in body and in soul. Such a being he had once possessed in his only little daughter, a virgin of eighteen years. All her clothes had been spun and woven by virgin hands, and as she had a brave spirit, she had often helped him to cite the Astral angel *Och*. But the last time she had assisted at the conjuration, the angel himself had strangled her with his own hands, twisting her neck so horribly that her tongue hung out of her mouth. And thus she died before his very face. The cause was, as he, poor father, had heard afterwards, that she had suffered a young student to kiss her, and so the pure virginity of her soul was lost. Now if the gracious Prince knew of any such pure virgin, who besides must be brave and courageous as an amazon, matters would proceed easily, they would make an end of the demon Sidonia without the least difficulty.

He had the clothes ready, all spun by virgins; item, all the necessary *instruments*.

So my gracious Prince sits and thinks awhile, then shakes his head, and says, laughing: "Methinks such a virgin were rarer than a white raven. It would be easy to find one pure in form, but a virgin pure in soul—and then as brave as Deborah and Judith. Mag. Joel, such a virgin, methinks, is not to be had, and you did evil to put your poor little daughter to such a test. For woman-flesh is a weak flesh since the day of Eve, as we all know. But you talked of a second mode, what is it? Let me hear."

Hereupon the *magister* sighed for grief, wiped his eyes, and spake: "Ah, yes! you are right, my good Lord. Fool that I was, I might have had my little daughter still, for though she only allowed the student to kiss her, yet by that one kiss the pure mirror of her soul was dimmed, and before the angels of God she was henceforth unholy. However, as touching the second method, it is the *Schem Hamphorasch* through which all things are possible."

The Duke.—"What is the *Schem Hamphorasch*?"

Ille.—"The seventy names of the Most High and ever-blessed God, according to the seventy nations, and the seventy tongues, and the seventy elders of Moses, and the seventy disciples of Christ, and the seventy weeks of Daniel. To him who knows this name, the Holy God will appear again as he did aforetime in the days of the patriarchs."

"The Duke.—You are raving, good Joel; yet—but how can this be possible?"

Ille.—"I am not raving, gracious Prince; for tell me, wherefore is it that the great God does not appear to men now, as he did in times long past? I answer, because we no longer know his name. This name, or the *Schem Hamphorasch*, Adam knew in paradise, and therefore spake with God, as well as with all animals and plants. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elias, Elijah, &c.—all knew this name, and performed their wonders by it alone. But when the beastly and idolatrous Jews gave themselves over to covetousness and all uncleanness, they forgot this holy name; so, as a punishment, they endured a year of slavery for each of the seventy names which they had forgotten; and we find them,

therefore, serving seventy years in Babylonian bonds. After this they never learned it again, and all miracles and wonders ceased from amongst them, until the ever-blessed God sent his Son into the world, to teach them once more the revelation of the Schem Hamphorasch; and to all who believed on him, he freely imparted this name, by which, also, they worked wonders; and that it might be fixed for ever in their hearts, he taught them the blessed Pater Noster, in which they were bid each day to repeat the words, 'Hallowed be thy name.' Yea, even in that last glorious high-priestly prayer of his—in face of the bitter anguish and death that was awaiting him, he says, 'Father, keep them in thy name;' or, as Luther translates it, "Keep them above thy name." For how easily this name is lost, we learn from David, who says that he spelt it over in the night, so that it might not pass from his mind. (Psalm cxix. 55.) Item, after the resurrection, he gave command to go and baptise all nations—not *in* the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as Luther has falsely rendered the passage, but *for*, or *by*, the name—that such might always be kept before their eyes, and never more pass away from the knowledge of mankind. And the holy apostles faithfully kept it, and St. Paul made it known to the Heathen, as we learn (Acts ix. 15). And all miracles that they performed were by this name. Now the knowledge remained also with the early Christians, and each person was baptised *by* this name; and he who knew it by heart could work miracles likewise, as we know by Justin Martyr and others, who have written of the power and miraculous gifts of the early church. But when the pure doctrine became corrupted, and the Christian church (like the Jewish of former times) gave itself up to idolatry, masses, image-worship, and the like, the knowledge of the mystic name was withdrawn, and all miracles have ceased in the church from that up to this day."

While Magister Joel so spake, his Highness Duke Francis fell into a deep fit of musing. At last he exclaimed: "Good Joel, you are a fanatic, an enthusiast—surely we know the name of God; or what hinders us from knowing it?"

Ille.—“You err, my gracious Prince, for this name is the holy and mystic *Tetragrammaton*, ‘Jehovah,’ which is the chief and highest name of God, and which truly is found written in the Scriptures; but of the true pronunciation of the name no man knoweth at this day, for the letters J. H. V. H. are wanting in all the old manuscripts.”*

Magister Joel continues: “But be comforted; there were some faithful souls on the earth, who did not entirely lose the remembrance of the Schem Hamphorasch; and your Highness will wonder to hear, that even in this very town the secret exists, in the possession of an old man, who has it, really and truly, locked up in his trunk, though, I confess, he is as great a rogue himself as ever breathed.”

Hereupon his Grace jumped up, and embraced the *magister*. “Let him not spare the gold; only bring him this treasure. How could it be done? How did the man get it? Let him tell the whole story.”

Ille.—“It was a long story; but he would just give it in brief:—A Jew out of Anklam, named Benjamin, went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; and having suffered great hardships and distress by the way, was taken in and sheltered by a hermit, in the desert, who converted and baptised

* For those who are unacquainted with Hebrew, I shall just observe here, that, in fact, the proper pronunciation of the name “Jehovah” is a vexed question with the learned up to this hour. Ewald, one of the latest authorities, and who has taken much trouble in investigating the subject, says, that there is the highest probability that the word should be pronounced “Jahve,” signifying, he who should come (*ὁ ἐρχόμενος*), for which reason the Baptist’s disciples asked Christ, (Matt. xi. 13), “Art thou He who should come?”—namely, the Messiah, Jahve, or as we call it, Jehovah. Compare Heb. x. 37; Hagg. ii. 6, 7; Revelations i. 8. I must observe, next, that all the Theophanisms (God manifestations) recorded in the Old Testament, to which the Theosophistic, cabalistic Dr. Joel refers, were considered by the early Christian fathers as manifestations to the senses, not of God—whom no man hath seen or can see—but of the *ἀσάφης* Christ. Even the elder rabbins understand, in these Theophanisms, not God, but the Mediator between God and the world—the angel Metatron. For the rest, I need scarcely remark that the exegesis of Dr. Joel is false throughout. The Bible has been so tortured to support each man’s individual, strange, crude dogma, that it is no wonder even Protestants are falling back upon *tradition* as the best and surest interpreter of Scripture, and the clearest light to read it by.

him. The Jew stayed with the old hermit till he died; and the old man, as a costly legacy, left him the Schem Hamphorasch, written on seventy palm-leaves. But as Benjamin could not read a word of Hebrew, he resolved to return home to Pomerania, where his mother's brother lived—the Rabbi Reuben Ben Joachai, of Stettin. However, when he presented himself, poor and naked as he was, at his uncle's door, the Rabbi pushed him away, and shut the door in his face, the moment he said he had a favour to ask of him. This treatment so afflicted Benjamin, that he took ill on his return to the inn; but having nothing wherewith to pay the host, he sent a message to his uncle, the Rabbi, bidding him come to him, as he had a secret to impart.

“When the Rabbi arrived, Benjamin asked ‘What he would give for the Schem Hamphorasch, for people told him that it was the greatest of all treasures?—to him, however, it was useless, since he could not read Hebrew.’

“Hereat the Rabbi's eyes sparkled; he took the palm-leaves in his hand, and seeing that all was correct, offered a ducat for the whole; this Benjamin refused. Whereupon, after many cunning efforts to possess himself of it, which were all in vain, the Rabbi had to depart without the treasure. However, Benjamin suspecting that he would come back for it in a little while, cut out two of the leaves from revenge, and when my knave of a Rabbi returned, he sold him the incomplete copies for five ducats at last.

“This same Benjamin I (the Magister) attended afterwards in hospital when he was dying, and, as the poor wretch had no money, he gave me himself, upon his death-bed, the two abstracted palm-leaves out of gratitude, being all he had to offer. These two are now in my possession, and if we could only obtain the other portion, your Highness would have the holy and mystic Schem Hamphorasch complete. But how to get it? Gold he had already offered in vain to the Jew, Rabbi Reuben, who even denied having the Schem Hamphorasch at all; but his servant Meir, for a good bribe, told him in confidence that his master, the Rabbi, really and in truth had this treasure, though the knave denied the fact to him. It lay in a drawer in the Jewish school, beside the book of the law or the *Thora*, and my Magister thought

they might manage to gain admittance some night into the Jews' school, by bribing the man Meir well. Then they could easily possess themselves of the Schem Hamphorasch (which, indeed, was of no use to the old knave of a Rabbi), for the drawer could be known at once by the tapestry which hung before it, in imitation of the veil of the temple. If they once had the treasure, the angel Metatron would appear to them, the mightiest of all angels, and his Highness could not only obtain his protection against the devil's magic of the sorceress of Marienfliess, but also induce him to look graciously upon his Grace's dear spouse, whom this evil dragon had bewitched, as all the world saw plainly, so that she remained childless, as well as all the other dukes and duchesses of dear Pomerania land, who were rendered barren and unfruitful likewise by some demon spell."

Hereupon his Grace cried out with joy: "True, true! I will make him do all that; and when I obtain the Schem Hamphorasch I will learn it myself by heart, and repeat it day and night like King David, so that it never shall go out of my head—item, all priests in the land shall learn it by heart; and I will gather them together three times a year at Camyn, and hear them myself, man by man, repeat this said Schem Hamphorasch, so that never more can it pass from the memory of our church, as it did from that of the filthy Jews, or the impure Christians of the papacy."

Summa.—The Rabbi's servant, Meir, is bribed, and he promises to admit them both next night into the Jews' school, for there was to be a meeting there of the elders, and his master, the said Rabbi Reuben Ben Jochai, was to examine a *moranu* or teacher. They could conceal themselves in the women's gallery, where no one would discover them, and, after every one had gone, slip down and take what they pleased out of the drawer, then make off, for he would leave the door open for them—that was all he could do—his master might come, &c.

So all was done as agreed upon; the Prince and Mag. Joel crept up to the women's gallery, in which were little bull's-eyes, through which they could see clearly all that was going on; and scarcely were the candles lit when my knave of a Rabbi enters (he was a long, dry carl, with a white

beard, and ragged coat bound round the waist with a girdle) —item, the candidate, I think he was called David, a little man with curly red beard, and long red locks falling down at each side upon his breast: item, seven elders, and they place themselves in their great hats round a table. Then the Rabbi Reuben demands of the candidate to pay his dues first, for a knave had lately run away without paying them at all: the dues were ten ducats.

When the candidate had reckoned down the gold, Rabbi Reuben commenced to question him in Hebrew; whereupon the other excused himself, said he knew Hebrew, but could not answer in it; prayed, therefore, the master would conduct the examination in German. Hereupon my knave of a Rabbi looked grave, seemed to think that would be impossible, consulted with the elders, and finally asked them if the candidate David paid down each of them two ducats, and ten to himself, would they consent to have the examination conducted in the language of the German sow? Would they consent to this, out of great charity and mercy to the candidate David?

"Yea, yea—even so let it be," screamed the elders; "God is merciful likewise."

So my David again unbuttoned his coat, and reckoned down the fine; whereupon the examination began in German, and I shall here note part of it down, that all men may know what horrible blindness and folly has fallen upon the Jews, by permission of the Lord God, since they imprecated the blood of Christ upon their own heads. Not even amongst the blindest of the heathen have such base, low, grovelling superstitions and dogmas been discovered as these accursed Jews have forged for themselves since the dispersion, and collected in the Talmud. Well may the blessed Luther say, "If a Christian seeks instruction in the Scripture from a Jew, what else is it than seeking sight from the blind, reason from the mad, life from the dead, grace and truth from the devil?"

And this madness and blindness of the accursed race would never have been fully known, only that the examination was held in German (for in general it is conducted in Hebrew, to please the vain Jews), by which means the

Prince and Doctor Joel heard every word, and wrote it all down on their return home; and when afterwards his Highness, Duke Francis, succeeded to the government, he banished this Rabbi and the elders, with their whole forge of blasphemy and lies, for ever from his capital.

Here, therefore, are some of the most remarkable questions, but I must premise that K. means my Knave, namely the Rabbi, and C. the Candidatus.*

K. "Which is holier, the Talmud or the Scriptures?"

C. "I think the Talmud."

K. "Wherefore, wherefore?"

C. "Because Raf Aschi hath said, he who goes from the Hálacha (the Talmudical teaching) to the scripture will have no more luck;† and good luck we all prize dearly above all things—eh, my master?"

K. "Right, right; who is he like who reads only in the scripture, and not in the Talmud? What say our fathers of blessed memory?"

C. "They say that he is like one who has no God."‡

K. "Can the Holy and ever-blessed One sin? What is the greatest sin he has committed?"

C. "First; he made the moon smaller than the sun."

K. "Our Rabbis of blessed memory are doubtful upon this point, as Jonathan, the son of Usiel, says, in the Targum of Moses.§ But which is the greatest sin of all that the holy and ever-blessed One committed?"

C. "I think it was when he forswore himself.¶ For he

* Lest my reader might think that what follows is a malicious invention of my own to bring the Jews into disrepute, I shall add the precise page of the Talmud from which each question is taken (from Eisenmenger's "Judaism Unveiled," Königsberg, 1711, and other sources). The Jews, I know, endeavour to deny that they hold these doctrines; but it is, nevertheless, quite true that all their learned men who have been converted to Christianity since the time of the Reformation, confessed that these dogmas were intimately woven into their belief, and formed its groundwork.

† Talmud, tract. Chagiga, fol. x. col. 1. Raf Aschi, the author of the Gemara, a portion of the Talmud.

‡ Talmud, tract. Eruvin.

§ The ancient Chaldee paraphrase of the O. T. is called Targum by the Jews. It is split into the Jerusalemite, and the Babylonian Targum.

¶ Talmud, tract. Sanhedrin.

first swore, saith Rabbi Eliaser, that the children of Israel, who were wandering in the desert, should have no part in eternal life; and then his oath lay heavy on him, so that he got the angel Mi to absolve him therefrom."

K. "It was, in truth, a great sin, but a greater methinks was, that he created the accursed Nazarene—the Jesu—the idol of the children of Edom. I mean the Christ."

C. "Rabbi, that is not in the Talmud."

K. "Fool! it is the same. I have said it, therefore it is true. Knowest thou not, when a Rabbi says, 'This thy right hand is thy left, and this thy left hand is thy right,' thou must believe it, or thou wilt be damned?"*

Here all the elders cried out—

"Yea, yea; the word of a Rabbi is more to be esteemed than the words of the law, and their words are more beautiful than the words of the prophets, for they are words of the living God."†

K. "Now answer; what says the Talmud of that Adam Belial, that Jesu, that crucified, of whom the Christians say that he was God?"‡

C. "That he was the son of an evil woman, who learned sorcery in Egypt, and he hid the sorcery in his flesh, in a wound which he made therein, and with the magic he deceived the people, and turned them from God. He practised idolatry with a baked stone, and prostrated himself before his own idol; and finally, as a fit punishment, he was first stoned to death, upon the eve of the passover, and then hung up upon a cross made of a cabbage-stalk, after which, Onkelos, the fallen Titus sister's son, conjured him up out of hell."§

K. "Is it possible to find more detestable Gojim than these impure and dumb children of Talvus—these Christian swine?"§

* Targum upon Deut. xvii. 11.

† Talmud, tract. Sanhedrin.

‡ Although the Jews deny that Christ is named in the Talmud, saying that another Jesus is meant, yet Eisenmenger has fully proved the contrary, on the most convincing grounds.

§ Children of Edom, children of harlots, swine, dogs, abominations, worshippers of the crucified, idolators, are titles of honour freely given to Christians by the Rabbis.—See Eisenmenger.

C. "No; that were impossible."

K. "It permitted us to deceive them and spoil them of their goods."

C. "Eh? Wherefore are we the selected people, if we could not spoil the children of Edom? They are our slaves, for we have gold and they have none."

K. "Good, good; but where is it written that we may spoil the swine and take their goods?"

C. "The Talmud says, it is permitted to deceive a Goi, and take his goods."*

K. "Forget not the principal passage, Tract Megilla, fol. 13—'What, is it then permitted to the just to deal deceitfully? And he answered—Yea, for it is written, with the pure thou shalt be pure, and with the froward thou shalt learn frowardness.'† Item, it is written expressly in the *Parascha Bereschûh*—'It is permitted to the just to deal deceitfully, even as Jacob dealt;' and if our fathers of blessed memory acted thus, we were fools indeed not to skin the Christian dogs and flog them to the death. (Spitting out.) Curse on the unclean swine!"

C. "I will be no such fool, Rabbi, and if they compel me to take an oath, I will do as Rabbi Akkiva of blessed memory.

K. "Right, my son, pity thou canst not speak Hebrew; methinks then thou wouldst have been a light in Israel. Speak. How hath the Rabbi Akkiva sworn?"

C. "The Talmud says, 'Hereupon the Rabbi Akkiva took the oath with his lips, but in his heart he abjured it.'‡

K. "The Rabbi Akkiva, of blessed memory, was but a sorry liver. Canst thou too defend the violation of the marriage vow?"

C. "With the wives of the unclean Christian dogs, wherefore not? For Moses saith, Lev. xx. 10, "He who committeth adultery with his *neighbour's* wife shall be put to death;" so saith the Talmud, the wives of *others* are excepted; and Rabbi Solomon expressly says on this pas-

* Tract. Bava Mezia.

† 2 Sam. xxii. 27; a specimen of how the Talmudists interpret the Bible.

‡ Talmud, tra

sage, that under the word 'others' the wives of Gojim, or the Christian dogs, are meant."*

K. "Yea, cursed be they and their whole race. Dost thou curse them daily, as is thy duty?"

C. "My duty is to curse them once; I curse them thrice.†

K. "Then wilt thou be recompensed threefold when Messias comes, and the fine dishes, and the fine clothes will grow out of the blessed earth of themselves, that it will be a pleasure to see them.‡ Speak; what saith the Talmud? How large will the grapes then be?"

C. "So large that a man will put a single grape in the corner of his house, and tap it as if it were a beer-barrel. Is not that almost too large, master?"

K. "Look at my pert wisehead! Knowest thou not, that he who mocks the words of the wise goes straight to hell, as happened to that disciple who laughed at the Rabbi Jochanan, when he said that precious stones should be set in the gates of Jerusalem, three ells long, and three ells broad?§ Item, hast thou not read, how Rabbi Jacob Ben Dosethai went one morning from Lud to Ono for three miles in pure honey, or how Rabbi Ben Levi saw grapes in the land of Canaan, so large that he mistook them for fatted calves. What, then, will it not be when Messias comes?|| But who will *not* partake these blessings?"

C. "The accursed swine, the Christians."¶

K. "Wherefore not?"

C. "Because they eat swine's flesh, and believe on the Talvus, who deceived the people through his sorceries."

K. "All true; but when the Talmud says that the impure Nazarene brought all his sorceries out of Egypt, what say our Rabbis of blessed memory against that?"

* Eisenmenger quotes a prayer-book of the Jews on this subject, called *The Great Tephilla*.

† Talmud, tract. Sanhedrin.

‡ Talmud, tract. Kethuvoth.

§ Talmud, tract. Bava Bathra.

|| In tractat Kethuvoth.

¶ Eisenmenger ii. 777, &c. On this point he brings forward numerous quotations from the later rabbinical writings; for it is certain that, on *this* subject, the Talmud judges more mildly.

C. That he secretly stole the Schem Hamphorasch out of the temple, and stitched it into his flesh.”*

K. “What is the Schem Hamphorasch?”

C. “God’s wonder, his greatest! the seventy names of the holy and ever blessed God; and to him who knows them will the angel Metatron appear, as he appeared to our forefathers, and all stones can he turn to diamonds, and all loam to gold.”

K. “Dost thou know, my son, that I myself possess this Schem Hamphorasch?”

C. (clasping his hands) “Wonder of God! can it be? And have you all these riches?”

K. “One of the accursed Christian dogs deceived me, and kept back two of the leaves (may God plague him in eternity for it), but still it effects much. I sell the holy Schem in little pieces, as a cure for all diseases; yea, even bits no larger than a grain will bring three ducats—item, I sell bits of it to the dying to lay upon their stomachs, that so they may gain eternal blessedness. Wilt thou buy a little grain too—eh? Ask the elders here if ever better physic were found than the least grain of dust from the holy Schem Hamphorasch?”

So the elders swore as my knave bid them, and said that no better physic could be, and told of the various diseases which it had cured in their own persons—item, that no Jew in the whole town was without a morsel, be it large or small, to lay on his stomach when dying; “but the greater the piece,” said the Rabbi, “the greater the blessedness.”

Now as the red-haired disciple seemed much inclined to purchase a bit, the Rabbi went over to the drawer, withdrew the tapestry, and, lifting up the golden jad,† pointed smilingly to the palm-leaves therein with it. “This,” he said to the disciple, “was the ever-blessed Schem Hamphorasch itself, if he had not already believed his words.”

Meanwhile the aforesaid Meir, the Rabbi’s servant, crept

* An extract from the horrible book of curses against the Saviour, the *Toledoth Jeschu*, is given in Eisenmenger; the entire is printed in Dr. Wagenseil’s *Tela Ignea Satanae*.

† The jad—a gold or silver hand, with which a priest pointed out the reader of the Tora.

forth from under the women's gallery, and spake: "Now may ye stick two Christian dogs dead, who are hiding here to steal the blessed golden treasure from my master the Rabbi; the clock has struck eleven, and the Christian swine are snoring in all quarters of the city. Up to the women's gallery! up to the women's gallery! There they sit! Their six ducats I have safe; kill the dumb uncircumcised dogs! strike them dead! For a ducat I will fling them into the Oder. Come, come! here are knives! here are knives."

When the Duke and Doctor Joel heard all this, and saw all through the little bull's-eyes, they jumped up and clattered down the stairs, the Duke drawing his dagger, which by good luck he had brought with him. But the Jews are already on them, and the Rabbi strikes the Duke on the face with the golden jad, screaming:—

"Accursed dog! there is one golden blow for thee, and a second golden blow for thee, and a third golden blow for thee; put them out to interest, and thou wilt have enough to buy the Schem Hamphorash." And the others fell upon the doctor, beating him till their fists were bloody, and sticking him with their knives. So my magister roared: "O gracious Lord! tell your name, I beseech you, or in truth they will murder us—they will beat us to death!"

But the Duke had hit the Rabbi such a blow with his dagger across the hand, that the golden jad fell to the ground, and the Duke, leaning his back against a pillar, hewed right and left, and kept them all at bay.

But this did not help, for the traitor knave, Meir, creeping along on his knees, got hold of the Duke's foot, and lifting it up suddenly in the air, made him lose his balance, and my gracious Prince stumbled forward, and the dagger fell far from his hand, upon which he cried out: "Listen, ye cursed Jewish brood! I am your Prince, the Duke of Pomerania! My brother shall make ye pay for this: your flesh shall be torn from the bones, and flung to dogs by to-morrow, if you do not instantly give free passage to me and my attendant." Then taking his signet from his finger, he held it up, and cried, "Look here, ye cursed brood; here are my arms—the ducal Pomeranian arms—behold! behold!"

At this hearing, the Rabbi turned as pale as chalk, and all the others started back from Dr. Joel, trembling with terror, while the Duke continued: "We came not here to steal the Schem Hamphorasch, as your traitor knave has given out, but to hear your accursed Satan's crew with our own ears, which also we have done."

"Oh, your Highness," cried the Rabbi, "it was a jest—all a mere innocent jest. The accursed knave is guilty of all. Come, gracious Prince, I will unbar the door; it was a jest—may I perish if it was anything more than a merry jest, all this you have heard."

And scarcely had the door been closed upon the Duke and Dr. Joel, when they heard the Jews inside falling upon the traitorous knave and beating him till he roared for pain, as if in truth they had stuck him on a pike. But they cared little what became of him, and hastened back with all speed to the ducal residence.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW THE DUKE FRANCIS SEEKS A VIRGIN AT MARIENFLIESS TO CITE THE ANGEL OCH FOR HIM—OF SIDONIA'S EVIL PLOT THEREUPON, AND THE TERRIBLE UPROAR CAUSED THEREBY IN THE CONVENT.

AFTER his Highness found that to obtain the Schem Hamphorasch was an impossible thing, he resolved to seek throughout all Pomerania for a pure and brave-hearted virgin, by whose aid he could break Sidonia's demon spells, and preserve his whole princely race from fearful and certain destruction. He therefore addressed a circular to all the abbesses, conjecturing that if such a virgin were to be found, it could only be in a cloister; and this was the letter:—

"FRANCISCUS, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, DUKE OF POMERANIA, STETTIN, CASSUBEN, AND WENDEN, BISHOP OF CAMYN, PRINCE OF RUGEN, COUNT OF GUTZKOW, LORD OF THE LANDS OF LAUENBURG AND BUTOW, ETC.

"WORTHY ABBESS, TRUSTY AND GOOD FRIEND,—Be it known to you *that we have immediate need of the services of a pure virgin—but in*

all honour—and are diligently seeking for such throughout our ducal and ecclesiastical states; but understand, not alone a virgin in act—for they can be met with in every house—but a virgin in soul, pure in thought and word, for by her agency we mean to build up a holy and virtuous work; as Gregory Nyssensis says (*De Virginitate*, Opp. tom. ii. fol. 593):—‘Virginity must be the fundamentum upon which all virtue is built up, then are the works of virtue noble and holy; but virginity, which is only of the form, and exists not in the soul, is nothing but a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout, or a pearl which is trodden under foot of swine.’

“Further, the said virgin must be of a brave, steadfast, and man-like spirit, who fears nothing, and can defy death and the devil, if need be.”

• If ye have such a virgin, upon whom, with God’s help, I can build up my great virtuous work, send her to our court without delay, and know that we shall watch over such virgin with all princely goodness and clemency; but know also, that if on trial such virgin is not found pure in thought and word, great danger is in store for her, perchance even death.

“Signatum Camyn, 1st September, 1617.

“FRANCISCUS, *manu sua.*”

“*Postscriptum.*—Are the winter gloves ready? Forget not to send them with the beer-wagon; my canons esteem them highly.”

When this letter reached the abbess of Marienfliess by the beer-wagon of the honourable chapter of Camyn, she was much troubled as to how she ought to proceed. Truly there were two young novices lately arrived, of about fifteen or sixteen, named Anna Holborne and Catharina Maria von Wedel. These the abbess thought would assuredly suit his Highness—item, they were of a wonderful brave spirit, and had gone down at night to the church to chase away the martens, though they bit them cruelly, because they prevented the people sleeping; and, further, never feared any ghost-work or devil’s work that might be in the church, but laughed over it. When these same virgins, however, heard what the abbess wanted, they excused themselves, and said they had not courage to peril their lives, though in truth they were pure virgins in thought and word. But they could not hold their tongue quiet, but must needs blab (alas, woe!) to Anna Apenborg, who runs off instantly to the refectory to Sidonia, whom she had appeased by means of some sauces, and tells her the whole story, and of his Grace’s wonderful lett—

So my hag laughed—never suspecting that she was the cause of all—and said, “She would soon make out if such a virgin were to be found in the convent; but would Anna promise secrecy?” And when the other asseverated that she would be as silent as a stone in the earth, my hag continued:—

“I have got a receipt from that learned man, Albertus Magnus—his book upon women—and we shall try it upon the nuns; but thou must hold thy tongue, Anna.”

“Oh, she would sooner have her tongue cut out than blab a word; but what was the receipt?”

Here Sidonia answered,—“She would soon see. She would give the sisterhood a little of her fine beer to drink, with some of it therein; and as she had got fresh sausages and other good things in plenty by her, she would pray the abbess and the whole convent to dine with her on the following Monday; then the dear sister should see wonders.”

And in truth my hag was so shameless, that on Sunday, after church, she prayed all the virgins, saying,—“Would the dear sisters eat their mid-day meal with her next day, to show that they forgave her, if she had ever been over hasty? Ah, God! she loved peace above everything; but they must each bring their own can, for she had not cans enough for all; and her new beer was worth tasting—a better beer had she never brewed.”

Summa.—All the sisterhood gladly accepted her invitation, thinking from her Christian mildness of speech in the church that she indeed wished to be reconciled to them;—item, the abbess promised to come, holding that compliance brings grace, but harshness disfavour; but here the reverse was the case.

Early on this same Monday, the wagon returned laden with beer for the honourable chapter, and the abbess despatched an answer by it to his Highness the bishop, as follows:—

“MOST REVEREND BISHOP AND ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE, MY FRIENDLY SERVICES TO YOUR GRACE.

“GRACIOUS LORD,—Concerning the matter of which your Highness writes, I think there is no lack here of such virgins as you describe,

but none are of steadfast enough heart to brave the great danger with which your Highness says they are menaced; for we have a nature like all women, and are weak and faint-hearted. But, methinks, there is one brave enough, and in all things pure, who would be of the service your Grace demands—I mean Dilia Bork, daughter of Jobst Bork of Saatzig; I counsel your Grace, therefore, to try her.

“Now, as touching the winter gloves, I shall send some along with this; but Sidonia will knit no gloves, and says, ‘the fat canons are like enough to old women already, without putting gloves on them;’ by which your Highness may judge of her impure mouth. God better her!

“Your Princely Grace’s and my reverend bishop’s humble servant and subject,

“Marienfiess, 5th Sept. 1617.

“MAGDELENA V. PETERSDORFIN.”

Now when twelve o’clock struck, and mid-day shone on the blessed land, all the nuns proceeded in their long black habits and white veils to Sidonia’s apartment, each with her beer-can in her hand (woe is me! how soon they rushed back again in storm and anger).

Then they sat down to the sausages and other good morsels, while Anna Apenborg was on tip-toe of expectation to see what would happen; and old Wolde was there quite well again (for ill weeds never die—no winter is cold enough for that). And she filled each of their cans with the beer which Sidonia had brewed, after a new formula; but, lo! no sooner had they tasted it than first Dorothea Stettin starts up, and Sidonia asks what ails her.

To which she answers: “She is not superstitious, but there was surely something wrong in the beer. She felt quite strange.” And she left the room, then another, and another—in fine, all who had tasted the beer started up in like manner and followed Dorothea. Only the abbess and some others who had not partaken of it remained. Anna Apenborg had disappeared amongst the first, and presently a terrific cry was heard from the court-yard, as if not alone the cloister, but the whole world was in flames. Curses, cries, menaces, threats, screams, all mingled together, and shouts of “Run for a broomstick! the accursed witch! the evil hag! let us punish her for this!”

Whereupon the abbess jumps up, flings open the window, and beholds Dorothea Stettin so changed in mien, voice,

gestures—in fine, in her whole being—that she was hardly to be recognised. She looks black and blue in the face, has her fists clenched, stamps with her feet, and screams.

“For God’s sake! what ails you, Dorothea?” asked the alarmed abbess. But no answer can she hear; for all the virgins scream, roar, howl, and curse in one grand chorus, as if indeed the last day itself were come. So she runs down the steps as quick as she can, while Sidonia looks out at the window, and laughing, said: “eh, dear sisters, this is a strange pastime you have got, better come up quickly, or the pudding will be cold.”

At this the screeching and howling were redoubled, and Dorothea spat up at the window, and another flung up a broomstick, so that my hag got a bloody nose, and drew in her head screaming now likewise.

Then they all wanted to rush up into the refectory, each armed with a broomstick to punish Sidonia, and they would not heed the abbess, who still vainly asked what had angered them? but the other sisters who were descending met them half way, and prevented their ascent; whereupon the abbess raised her voice and called out loud: “Whoever does not return instantly at my command as abbess, shall be imprisoned forthwith, and condemned to bread and water for a whole day! Item, whoever speaks until I address her, shall be kept half-a-day on bread and water. Now Dorothea speak—you alone, and let every one of you descend the steps and return here to the court-yard.” This menace availed at last, and with many sobs and groans, Dorothea at last told of Sidonia’s horrible plot, as Anna Apenborg had explained to them. How she had invited them on purpose to disgrace them for ever in the eyes of the Prince and of the whole world, and the abbess could now judge herself, if they had not a right to be angry. But she must have her sub-prioret back again, out of which the scandalous witch had tricked her, and the abbess must forthwith dispatch a messenger to his Highness, praying him to chase this unclean beast out of the convent, and into the streets again, from which they had taken her; for neither God nor man had peace or rest from her.

Sidonia overhearing this from the window, stretched out

her grey head again, wiped away with her hand, the blood that was streaming from her nose, and then menacing the abbess with her bloody fist, screamed out, "write if you dare! write if you dare!" So the curses, howls, yells, screeches, all break loose again; some pitch their shoes up at the windows, others let fly the broomsticks at the old hag, and Dorothea cried out: "Let all pure and honourable virgins follow me!" Yet still a great many of the sisters gathered round the abbess, weeping and wringing their hands, and praying for peace, declaring they would not leave her; but all the younger nuns, particularly they who had drunk of Sidonia's accursed beer, followed the sub-prioress, and as the discontented Roman people withdrew once to the Aventine-mount, so the cloister malcontents withdrew to the Mahlenberg, howling and sobbing, and casting themselves on the ground from despair. In vain the abbess ran after them, conjuring them not to expose themselves before God and man: it was all useless, my virgins screamed in chorus—"No, that they would never do, but to the cloister they would not return till the princely answer arrived, expelling the dragon for ever. Let what would become of them, they would not return. The jewel of their honour was dearer to them than life."

Now Sidonia was watching all this from her window, and as she justly feared that now in earnest the wrath and anger of the two Princes would fall on her, she goes straight to the abbess, who sits in her cell weeping and wringing her hands, menaces her again with her bloody fist, and says: "Will you write? will you write? ay, you may, but you will never live to hear the answer!" Upon which, murmuring to herself, she left the chamber: "what can the poor abbess do?" And the cry now comes to her, that not only the miller and his men, but half the town likewise, are gathered round the virgins. Oh, what a scandal! She wrings her hands in prayer to God, and at last resolves to lay down her poor life, so that she may fulfil her hard duty bravely as beseems her, goes then straight to the Mühlenberg and arranges the evil business thus:—Let the virgins return instantly to the cloister, and she would herself write to the Duke, tch the messenger this very night

but she begged for just two hours to herself, that she might make her will, and send for the sheriff's secretary to draw it up properly; also to search for her shroud which lay in her chest. For since her cruel children demanded her life, she would give it to them. The Duke's answer she would never live to hear. So Sidonia had prophesied just now.

Then she descended the hill, chanting that beautiful hymn of Dr. Nicolai's, while the virgins followed, and some lifted up their weeping voices in unison with hers:—

“Awake! the watchers on the tower,
Chant aloud the midnight hour;
Awake, thou bride Jerusalem!
Through the city's gloomy porches
See the flashing bridal torches;
Awake, thou bride Jerusalem!
Come forth, come forth, ye virgin choir,
Light your lamps with altar fire!
Hallelujah! in his pride
Comes the bridegroom to his bride;
Awake, thou fair Jerusalem!

Zion heard the watchers singing,
From her couch in beauty springing,
She wakes, and hastens joyful out.
Lo! he comes in heavenly beauty,
Strong in love, in grace, in duty;
Now her heart is free from doubt.
Light and glory flash before him,
Heaven's star is shining o'er him,
On his brow the kingly crown,
For the bridegroom is THE SON.
Hallelujah! follow all
To the heavenly bridal-hall,
There the Lamb hold festival!”

But behold, as they reached the convent gates, chanting their heavenly melody, there stood the demon-witch, dancing and singing her hellish melody:—

“Also kleien and also kratzen,
Meine Hunde and meine Katzen.”

And old Wolde and the cat, in his little red stockings, danced right and left beside her.

At this horrible sight the poor virgins scampered off hither and thither to their cells, like doves flying to their *nests*, without uttering a word, only the abbess exclaimed—

"But two hours, my children, in the church!" Whereupon she goes, makes her will, and prepares her shroud. Item, sends for the dairy-mother, gives her the shroud. Item, a sack of moss and hops to make a pillow for her coffin, for such she would like her poor corpse to have. Then sends for the convent carpenter, and makes him take her measure for a coffin; and, lastly, strengthened in God, goes to the church to write her own death-warrant, namely, the letter to his Highness. Yet many of the virgins, for fear of Sidonia, refused to affix their signatures thereto, among whom was Anna Apenborg, who, as soon as she left the church, ran up to the refectory to chatter over the whole business with Sidonia. Item, how the new convent-porter was to be sent that same midnight with the letter to his Highness.

So Sidonia began now to scold, because Anna could not hold her tongue, and had betrayed her secret to the sisters. But the other said—

"She thought it was all a pure jest, and had told them for fun, that they might have a good laugh together; for how could she know that they would all grow raging mad like that!"

So my hag forgave her, and bid her sit down and eat some sausage for her supper, in return for the news she had brought her. Meanwhile, she would write a letter to his Highness likewise, and Anna should give it to the convent-porter, to take with him along with that of the abbess. This was the letter:—

"SERENE PRINCE AND GRACIOUS LORD!

"Now will your Highness perceive, by this writing, how faithful and true a servant I am to your princely house, though the godless world has raised up an evil cry against me in your Highness' ears. Gracious Prince, the Reverend Lord Bishop wrote to our worthy abbess of Marienfließ, bidding her seek out for him a virgin, pure in thought, word, and deed, by whose help he might perform some great virtue-work. Now, the abbess confided her perplexities on the matter to me, as sub-prioress. Whereupon, I said, 'that to serve your Highness, I would shew whether such a virgin were in the convent, but she must keep silence;' this she promised. Whereon I brewed a drink, according to Albertus Magnus—it is at the 95th page—and bade them all to dinner, when I secretly put the drink into some of my best beer. Now Alber— that the drink will have no effect on

pure virgin, only on the reverse. Your Highness, therefore, may judge what sort of sisterhood we have, when, no sooner had they drank, than almost all rose up raging mad, and rushed out of the convent into the court-yard, where such a *scandalum* arose—screams, curses, yells, and shrieks, that your Grace may surely judge no honourable virgin was to be found amongst them. In fact, the worthy abbess, a few others, and I myself, were the only persons who remained unaffected by the draught. Therefore, I counsel our gracious Bishop to select one from amongst us, for his great virtue-work. I, indeed, have the strongest heart of all, and the bravest courage.

"But, assuredly, the worst of all these light wantons was Dorothea Stettin, from whom I received the sub-prioret, because, as your Grace heard, she held unchaste discourse during her illness, and, therefore, is as much suited to be sub-prioress as a jewel of gold to a swine's snout. She, therefore, drew off all the other raging wantons to the Muhlenberg, declaring that they would not return until I, who had done this great service to my Lord Bishop, was turned out into the streets. Then the lewd common-folk gathered round the sisters on the hill, who betrayed their own evil case, methinks, by their rage, and mocked and jeered them, till the abbess herself had to go forth and entreat them to return; but they despised her, and the sheriff must needs gallop up with his horsewhip, and whip them before him, but in vain; the evil is too strong in them. They still said, 'that I,' unfortunate maiden, 'must be accused to your Highness of all this scandal,' for the silly abbess had betrayed what I had done; 'and that till I was turned out of the convent, they would not come back.' Now the poor abbess fell sick at such base contempt and insult to her authority, and, feeling her end near, she made her will, and took out the shroud from her trunk, and had the carpenter to measure her for her coffin, and at last consented to write to your Grace, because by no other means would these evil wantons be satisfied, or the great scandal and disgrace to the convent be averted. But, I think, if your Grace would write her a private letter, she would change her opinion, (Ah, yes, the hag means her to receive it!) and make a far different resolve when your Grace sees how true and faithful I have acted as

"Your Highness's most humble maiden,

"Marienfliess, 6th Sept. 1617.

"SIDONIA BORK,

"Otto Bork's only and unfortunate orphan."

"P.S.—If she dies, I pray your Grace to hold me in your remembrance."

CHAPTER XV.

OF THE DEATH OF THE ABBESS, MAGDALENA VON PETERSDORF.

—ITEM, HOW DUKE FRANCIS MAKES JOBST BORK AND HIS DAUGHTER, DILIANA, COME TO CAMYN, AND WHAT HAPPENS THERE.

Now the messenger had hardly departed, when Sidonia arranged her food for three days, laid two new brooms crosswise under the table. Item, had her bath carried up by old Wolde from the kitchen to the refectory, and lastly locked herself up, giving out that she must and will pray to God to pardon her fallen sisters for all their sins, and that up to Friday night, no one should disturb her.

Summa.—The unfortunate abbess ascertained, but too well, that same night what such praying betokened. She screamed out, like all the others, that it seemed as if a miner was in her breast, and hammered there, striving to raise up the bones; and the good dairy-mother, a pious and tender-hearted creature, not very old either, never left her side during all her martyrdom. For three days and three nights she took no rest, but watched by the sick abbess; lifting her from the bed to the cold floor, and from the cold floor to the bed, and refused a piece of gold the abbess offered for her trouble, begging it might be given to Lisa Behlken, a little gipsy maiden, whose thievish and heathenish parents had left her behind them in the town, but who had been taken in and sheltered by the poor widow, though she had enough to do to get her living alone.

Summa.—On the Friday night the worthy abbess expired in horrible tortures; and, in consequence, such a fear and horror fell upon the whole convent, that they trembled and shook like aspen leaves, and bitterly repented now of their folly with loud cries and weeping, in having, with their own hands, helped to cast down their only stay and support.

So, next morning, Sidonia summoned the whole chapter to her apartment, drew herself up like a black adder, as she was, menaced them with her dry fists, and spake—

"See now, ye shameless wantons, what ye have done! Ye have murdered the worthy abbess, though she told you herself, it would be her death if ye came not down from the Muhlenberg. Giving up your honour and the honour of our convent, ye vile crew, as a prey to the malicious world. In vain have I cried to God three days and three nights for pardon for your heavy sins, and for support for our dear mother; your sins are an offence to the Lord, and He would not hearken to me. For this morning I hear, to my great terror, that the good abbess, just as I feared, has been done to death by your vile obduracy and disobedience."

As the blasphemous devil thus went on, all were silent round her. Even Dorothea Stettin had not a word—for though her wrath was great, her fear was yet greater. Only Anna Apenborg, who had her eyes always about, cried out—

"See there, dear sisters, there comes the porter back from Old Stettin. Ah, that he should find our good mother in her coffin, as she prophesied!"

So Sidonia despatches a sister for the princely letter, and bids the others remain; and when the letter is brought, Sidonia breaks the seal, runs over the contents to herself, laughs, and then says, at last—

"Listen to the message his Grace sends to our, alas, now dead mother, as a kind and just father!" Reads—

"HONOURABLE MOTHER, WORTHY ABBESS.

"As our serene and gracious Prince is just setting off to hunt with the illustrious patricio, Philip Heinhofer of Augsburg, his Grace bids me say that he will visit the convent himself next month on his way to New Stettin, to advise with you, and investigate, in person, this evil business with the sisterhood. As to Sidonia, he reserves a different treatment for her.

"Your good son and friend,

"FRANCISCA BLODOW,

"Ducal Secretary."

"Old Stettin, 8th Sept. 1617.

Hereupon she stuck the letter in her pocket, clapped her hand over it, and continued—

"That is what I call a just, good father; and if I had not interposed with Christian charity, who knows what heaps of vile, shameless wantons might not be cast forth upon the streets. But I remember the words of my heavenly bride-

groom—"forgive and it shall be forgiven you!" And now to end, good sisters, since our worthy mother is no more, we must have a ruler over this uproarious convent. Therefore, let us proceed at once to elect her successor from amongst ourselves, that so our gracious Prince may be able to confirm your choice on his arrival next month. Proceed, then, since ye are all assembled here, that the convent may know in whom it may place confidence. Speak, Anna Apenborg, whom dost thou name for an abbess, my much-loved sister?"

With Sidonia's sausage still in her stomach, what else could she do, but bow and say—

"I think no one so worthy as our good sister Sidonia."

Hereat laughed my hag, and went on to ask the other virgins, and all those who had not been affected by the hellish drink, cried out, "Sidonia;" while those who had been, were afraid to dissent, and so cried out too for her. In fine, "Sidonia! Sidonia!" was heard from all lips, and so they took her for their abbess, whom but a few days before they would have flung out into the streets. Even Dorothea Steffin consented, on condition that she received back the sub-prioret. Whereupon Sidonia loosed her veil with the one golden key, and restored it to Dorothea with the Judas kiss; then bid her fetch the veil of the abbess with the two golden keys, for this was an heir-loom in the cloister. When it arrived, Sidonia goes to her trunk, and takes out a large regal cape that looked like ermine, but was only white cat's skin. She hung this upon her neck, and exclaimed—

"Hitherto I was lady of castles and lands—now, as abbess, I am of princely rank, for many princesses were abbesses in the time of the papacy; therefore, it is meet that I array myself as a princess, and I command ye all to treat me as a princess, and honour me as your abbess, and kiss my hand, which is the proper, due, and fitting reverence to be paid to my rank. The late, worthy matron, indeed, suffered ye to treat her with little respect, and your late vile contempt of her on the Muhlenberg shows (God be good to us!) but too well what fruit her neglect of these things brought forth."

Truly the pride of this hag was equal to her wickedness;

for mark, already for a-year-and-a-day before this, she had made the convent-porter and others bring her white cats and black cats; these she killed and skinned, and sewed the black cats' tails on the white skins, to make a show withal, for ermine skin was above her price, I am thinking. Yet no one knew wherefore she killed the cats, and for what cause. Now it all came to light.

No doubt these circumstances gave rise to that error which runs through the Pomeranian cotemporary authors, who assert all of them, that Sidonia was abbess of Marienfiess—though, in truth, she never was duly elected.*

But let us return now to his Highness, Bishop Francis. He sent to Jobst Bork, bidding him come instantly to Camyn with his little daughter, Diliانا. They knew nothing of his Grace's purpose, but were soon informed on entering the episcopal palace. For, after his Highness, with whom was Doctor Joel, desired them to be seated, the doctor placed Diliانا upon a stool, close to the window, beside which my magister had hung up a magic screen on purpose; and, as the blessed sun poured in through the window, Diliانا's beautiful, delicate form was shadowed forth upon the pure white linen with which it was covered. Whereupon the magister bent down, stuck his hands on his fat sides, knit his brows, and contemplated the image steadily for some time; then, starting up, gave a loud huzzah, and cried out:—

“Gracious Prince, we have found it, we have found it! Here is a pure virgin. I know by the formation of the shadows along the virgin-linen that she is pure as the sun-angel—as the ascending morning dew.”

Here Jobst Bork shook his head, and the maiden blushed to her finger-ends, and looked down ashamed in her lap. Then his Grace said, laughing:—

“Do not wonder at our joy, for the destiny of our whole race, good Jobst, lies now in you and your daughter's hands. Through the witchcraft of Sidonia Bork, as ye know, and all the world testifies, our ancient race has been melted away till but a few dry twigs remain, and no young
— look up to us when our old eyes are failing. But what

* Cramer and Mikraelius make the same mistake.

Sidonia Bork has destroyed, Diliana Bork, by God's help, can restore. For, mark! after all human help had been found of no avail, this man whom ye see here, a *magister artium* of Grypswald, Joel by name, inquired of the spirits how the great evil could be turned away from our race; but they declared that none knew except the sun-angel, because he saw all that passed upon the earth. This angel, however, being the greatest of all spirits, will not appear unless a brave and pure virgin—pure in thought, word, and work—stand within the magic circle; therefore, we have sent for your daughter, hearing that she was such an one, and the magister hath proved the truth of the report even now. It rests with you, therefore, much-prized Diliana, sister to the angels in purity, and last and only hope of my perishing race, to save them at my earnest petition.

When he ended, Diliana remained quite silent, but Jobst wriggled on his chair, and at last spake:—

"Serene Prince, you know me for the most obedient of your subjects, but with the devil's work I will have nothing to do; besides, I see not why you must trouble spirits about my evil cousin, the sorceress of Marienfliess. Send to my castellan of Pansin, George Putkammer, he will thrust her in a sack to-night, and carry her to-morrow to Camyn—that you may believe, my Lord Duke!"

Then he related what the brave Knight had done, and how Sidonia had in truth left him in peace ever since, all through fear of the young Knight's good sword. His Grace wondered much at this. "Never could I have believed that so stout-hearted a man was to be found in all Pomerania—one that would dare to touch this notorious witch."

And he fell into deep musing, keeping his eyes upon Jobst's jack-boots, in which he had stuck a great hunting-knife. At last he spake:—"But if I seize her and burn her, will it be better with our race? I trow not; for she can leave the evil spell on us, perhaps, even if she were a hundred times burned. Her magic hath great power. Will burning her break the spell? No; we must act more cunningly with the dragon. Earth cannot help us in this. And here you see, Jobst, why I demand your daughter's help to conjure the angels of God."

"Then seek another virgin, my Prince," answered Jobst, "mine you shall never have. I have been once in the devil's claws, and I wont thrust myself into them again—much less my only darling child, whom I love a thousand times better than my life. No, no, her body and soul shall never be endangered by my consent."

"But where is the danger?" said the Duke. "It is with an angel, not a devil, your daughter is to speak; and surely no evil, then, could happen to our dear and chaste little sister?"

At last Diliانا exclaimed eagerly: "Ah! can it be possible to speak with the blessed angels, as the evil women speak with the devil? In truth, I would like to see an angel."

At this the Duke looked significantly at the magister, who immediately advanced, and began to explain the *opus magicum et theurgicum* to the maiden, as follows:—

"You know, fair young virgin, that our Saviour saith of the innocent children: 'Their angels always see the face of my Father which is in heaven' (Matt. xviii.) Item, St. Paul (Heb. i.): 'Are not the angels ministering spirits, sent forth for the service of those who are heirs of salvation?' This is no new doctrine, but one as old as the world. For you know, further, that Adam, Noah, the holy patriarchs, the prophets, &c. talked with angels, because their faith was great. Item, you know that, even in the New Testament, angels were stated to have appeared and talked with men; but later still, during the papal times even, the angels of God appeared to divers persons, as was well known, and of their own free will. For they did not always appear of *free will*; and therefore, from the beginning, conjurations were employed to *compel* them, and fragments of these have come down to us *ex traditione*, as we magistri say, from the time of Shem, the son of Noah, who revealed them to his son Misraim; and so, from son to son, they have reached to our day, and are still powerful."

"But," spake Diliانا, "is it then possible for man to compel angels?"

He.—"Yes, by three different modes; first, through the word, or the intellect; secondly, through the

heavenly bodies, or the astral vinculum; lastly, through the earthly creatures, or the elementary vinculum.

"Respecting first the *word*, you know that all things were made by it, and without it was nothing made that is made. With God the Lord, therefore, *word* and *thing* are one and the same; for when he speaks it is done; he commands, and it stands there. Also, with our father, Adam, was the *word* all-powerful; for he ruled over all beasts of the field, and birds, and creeping things by the *name* which he gave unto them, that is, by the *word* (Gen. ii.) This power too the word of Noah possessed, and by it he drew the beasts into the ark (Gen. vii.) for we do not read that he *drove* them, which would be necessary now, but they *went* into the ark after him, two and two, *i.e.* compelled by the power of his word.

"Next follows the *astral vinculum*, *i.e.* the sympathy between us and those heavenly bodies or stars wherein the angels dwell or rule. We must know their divers aspects, configurations, risings, settings, and the like, also the precise time, hour, and minute in which they exercise an influence over angel, man, and lower creatures, according as the ancients, and particularly the Chaldeans have taught us; for spirit cannot influence spirit at every moment, but only at particular times and under particular circumstances.

"Lastly comes the *elementary vinculum*, or the sympathy which binds all earthly creatures together—men, animals, plants, stones, vapours and exhalations, &c. but above all this cementing sympathy is strongest in pure virgins, as you, much-praised Diliana—"

Hereupon she spake surprised: "How can all this be? Is it not folly to suppose that the blessed angels could be compelled by influences from plants and stones?"

"It is no folly, dear maiden, but a great and profound truth, which I will demonstrate to you briefly. Everything throughout the universe is effected by two opposing forces, *attraction* or sympathy, *repulsion* or antipathy. All things in heaven as well as upon earth act on each other by means of these two forces."

"And as all within, above, beneath, in the heaven and on the earth, are types insensibly repeated of one grand archetypal type, so we find that the sun himself is a magnet, and

his different poles repels or attracts the planets, and amongst them our earth; in winter he repels her, and she moves darkly and mournfully along; in spring, he begins to draw her towards him, and she comes joyfully, amidst songs of the holy angels out of night and darkness, like a bride into the arms of her beloved. And though no ear upon earth can mark this song, yet the sympathies of each creature are attracted and excited thereby, and man, beast, bird, fish, tree, flower, grass, stones, all exhale forth their subtlest, most spiritual, sweetest life to blend with the holy singers.

“O maiden, maiden, this is no folly! Truly might we say that each thing feels, for each thing loves and hates. The animate as the inanimate, the earthly as the heavenly, the visible as the invisible. For what is love but attraction, or sympathy towards some object, whereby we desire to blend with it? And what is hate but repulsion or antipathy, whereby we are forced to fly or recoil from it.

“We, silly men, tear and tatter to pieces the rude coarse *materia* of things, and think we know the nature of an object, because, like a child with a mirror, we break it to find the image. But the life of the thing—the inner, hidden mystic life of *sympathies*—of this we know nothing, and yet we call ourselves wise!

“But what is the signification of this wide-spread law of love and hate which rules the universe as far as we know? Nothing else than the dark signature of *faith* impressed upon every creature. For what the thing loves, that is its God; and what the thing hates, that is its devil. So when the upright and perfect soul ascends to God, the source of all attraction, God descends to it in sympathy, and blends with it, as Christ says, ‘Whoso loves me, and keeps my word, my Father will love him, and we will come and take up our abode with him.’ But if the perverted soul descends to the source of all repulsion, which is the devil, God will turn away from him, and he will hate God and love the devil, as our blessed Saviour says (Matt. vi.) ‘No man can serve two masters, ye will *hate* one and *love* the other; ye cannot serve God and the devil.’ Such will be the law of the universe until the desire of all creatures *is fulfilled*, until the living word again descends from heaven,

and says, 'Let there be light!' and the new light will fall upon the soul. Then will the old serpent be cast out of the new heaven and the new earth. Hate and repulsion will exist no longer, but as *Esaïas* saith, 'The wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, will lie down together, and the child may play fearlessly upon the den of the adder. Hallelujah! Then will creation be free! then will it pass from the bondage of corruption into the lordly freedom of the children of God (*Rom. viii.*), and

Sun,
Moon, stars,
Earth, angels, men,
Beasts, plants, stones,
The living as the dead,
The great as the small,
The visible as the invisible,
Will find at last
The source of all attraction
Which they have ever ardently desired—
Round which they will ever circle
Day on day, night on night,
Century on century, millennium on millennium,
Lost in the infinite and eternal abyss
Of all love—
GOD!***

* Almost with the last words of this sketch, the second part of *Kosmos*, by Alexander von Humbolt, came to my hand. Evidently the great author (who so well deserves immortality for his contributions to science) views the world also as a whole; and wherever in ancient or modern times, even a glimpse of this doctrine can be found, he quotes it and brings it to light. But yet, in a most incomprehensible manner, he has passed over those very systems in which, above all others, this idea finds ample room; namely, the new platonism of the ancients (the Theurgic Philosophy), and the later Cabalistic, Alchymical, Mystic Philosophy (White Magic), from which system the deductions of *Magister Joel* are borrowed; but above all, we must name *Plotinus*, as the father of the new Platonists, to whom nature is throughout but one vast unity, one divine totality, one power united with one life. In later times, we find that *Albertus Magnus*, *Cornelius Agrippa*, and *Theophrastus Paracelsus*, held the same view. The latter uses the above word "attraction" in the sense of sympathy. And the systems of these philosophers, which are in many places full of profound truths, are based upon this idea.

CHAPTER XVI.

JOST BORK TAKES AWAY HIS DAUGHTER BY FORCE FROM THE DUKE AND DR. JOEL; ALSO, IS STRENGTHENED IN HIS UNBELIEF BY DR. CRAMER.—ITEM, HOW MY GRACIOUS PRINCE ARRIVES AT MARIENFLIESS, AND THERE VEHEMENTLY MENACES SIDONIA.

WHEN Dr. Joel had ended his discourse, the fair young virgin's eyes overflowed with tears; and clasping her hands, she sprang up, and seizing my magister by the hand, exclaimed, "Oh! sir, let us see the blessed angels! Let me talk with them."

But her father, who was dry and brief in speech, tore her away, saying sourly, "Have done, child; you must not dare to do it! Then they all prayed him to consent—the Duke, and the magister, and Diliaua herself; and the magister said, that in a few days the sun would be in Libra, which would be the fitting and best time; if they delayed, then a whole year must pass over without obtaining any help, for he had already demonstrated that each spirit had its particular time of influence. And so my magister went on. But all was in vain. So Diliaua stroked her father's beard with her little hands, and said: "Think, dear papa, on grand-mamma—her poor ghost; and that I can avenge her if I keep my virgin honour pure in thought, word, and deed! Is it not strange that my gracious Prince should just now come and demand the proof of my purity? Let me pass the trial, and then I can avenge the poor ghost, and calm the fears of his Highness all at once; for assuredly he has cause to fear Sidonia." So the Duke, and Magister Jost inquired eagerly what she meant by the ghost; and when they heard, they rejoiced, and said the finger of God was in it. "Would the Knight still strive against God?"

"No," he answered, but against the devil; for Luther says, 'each ghost-work must be of the devil, since the

departed soul must either be in heaven or in hell; if in heaven, it would have rest,' therefore he feared the ghost of his poor mother had nothing good about it, and he would take care and keep his child from the claws of the devil."

Thus the argument and strife went on, till Jobst at last cried out sharply: "Diliana, dost thou esteem the fifth commandment? If so, come with me." Whereupon the pious virgin threw herself upon his neck, exclaiming, "Father, I come!"

But my magister took her by the hand, to draw her from her father, whereat Jobst seized the hunting-knife that he had stuck in his jack-boots, and brandishing it, cried out: "Hands off, fellow, or I'll paint a red sign upon thee! My Lord Duke, in the name of the three devils, seek out another virgin; but my virgin, your Highness shall never have." Then seizing his little daughter by the waist, he rushed out of the room with her, growling like a bear with his cub, and down the stairs, and through the streets, never stopping or staying till he reached the inn, nor even once looking behind him or heeding his Grace, who screamed out after him: "Good Jobst, only one word; only one word, dear Jobst!"

And when my Jobst reached the inn, he roared for the coachman, bid him follow him with all speed to the road, paid down his reckoning to mine host, and was off, and already out of the town, just as the Duke and Dr. Joel reached the inn, to try and get him back again. So they return raging and swearing, while Jobst crouches down behind a thorn bush with his little daughter, till the coach comes up. And they have scarcely mounted it, when Dr. Cramer, of Old Stettin drives up; for he was on his way to induct a rector (I know not whom) into his parish, as the ecclesiastical superintendant lay sick in his bed. This meeting rejoiced the knight's heart mightily; and after he had peered out of the coach windows, to see if the Duke or the Doctor were on his track, and making sure that he was not pursued, he prayed Dr. Cramer to bide a while, and discourse him on a matter that lay heavy on his conscience. The Doctor having consented, they all alighted, and seated themselves in a " " where the coachman could not ov

hear their discourse. Then Jobst related all that had happened, and what had befallen Diliana?

"In all things you have done well, brave Knight," answered my excellent godfather. "For though doubtless, spirits can and do appear, yet is there always great danger to deny and soon in perceiving these appearances: and no one can say with security whether such apparitions be angel or devil; because St. Paul says 2 Cor. xi. 14. that 'Satan often changes himself into an angel of light;' and respecting the ghost of your mother, in my opinion it was a devil sent to tempt your dear little daughter: for it is written (Wisdom xxi.) 'The just are in the hand of God, and no evil touches them.'"

He is going on with his quotations, when Diliana calls out: "Godfather, here is a coach coming as fast as it can drive; and surely two men are therein!"

"Adieu! adieu!" cried the Knight, springing up, and dragging his daughter into the coach as quick as he could. Then he bid the coachman drive for life and death; and when they reached the wood, to take the first shortest cut to the left.

Meanwhile, the Duke and Dr. Joel come up with my worthy godfather, stop him, and ask what the Knight, Jobst Bork, was saying to him; for they had seen them both together, sitting in the hollow, along with Diliana?

On this, the dry sheep's cough got into my worthy godfather's throat from pure fright, for a lie had never passed his lips in all his life; therefore he told the whole story truly and honestly.

Meanwhile, the other coach drove on rapidly through the wood; and the coachman did as he was desired, and took the first path to the left, where they soon came on a fine, thick hazel grove. Here Jobst stopped to listen, and truly they could hear the other coach distinctly crushing the fallen leaves, and the voice of the Duke screaming: "Jobst, dost thou hear!—Jobst, may the devil take thee, wilt thou stop!"

"Ay, my Lord Duke," thought Jobst to himself, "I will stop as you wish, but I trust the devil will neither take me nor my daughter." Then he lifted the fair Diliana

himself out of the coach, and laid her on the green grass, under the thick nut trees, saying, "Where shall we fly to, my daughter? What thinkest thou?"

Illa.—"Why, to thy good castle of Saatzig, my father."

Ille.—"Marry, I'll take good care I won't—to fly from one danger to another; for will he not hunt us there—ay, till his spurs are red, and shouting all the way after me till his lungs burst like an old wind-bag."

Illa.—"Whither, then, my father?"

Ille.—"To Stramehl, methinks, to my cousin Bastien, where we shall remain until the time is passed, in which he can question the spirits; for, if I remember rightly, the sun will enter Libra in a few days."

Illa.—"But, dear father, is it not cruel thus to torment the good Prince? Oh! it must be so beautiful to talk to an angel!"

Ille.—"Do not anger me, my heart's daughter, do not anger me. Better be George Putkammer's good, loving wife; turn thy thoughts that way, my daughter, and in a year there will be something better worth looking at in the cradle than a spirit."

Illa.—Blushes and plucks the nuts over her head.

Ille.—"What sayest thou? Art thou for ever to put off these marriage thoughts?"

Illa.—"Ah! my heart's dear father, what would my poor grandmother say in eternity? It is impossible that, without God's will, the Duke and the poor ghost should have come upon the same thoughts about me."

Ille.—"Anger me not, child; thou art a silly, superstitious thing; without God's will, it may well be, but not without the devil's will. Thou hast heard what Luther says of ghosts, and we must believe him. Eh?"

Illa.—"But my Lord Duke and Dr. Joel say quite differently. Ah, father, let me see the blessed angels! Dr. Joel surely has seen them often, and yet no danger befell him."

Ille.—"Anger me not, daughter, I say, for the third time. It is written: 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;' and is not this tempting him—setting heaven and hell in an uproar all about a wicked old hag of a witch?"

Wherefore is the Duke such a goose? But I will give him no child of mine to run a race with to hell. Now rise, child, and follow me to the coach!"

Illa.—"But you must make me one promise" (weeping).

Ille.—"What then?"

Illa.—"Speak no more of marriage to me till I say: 'Father, now let the marriage be.'"

Ille.—"With the young Knight, George?"

Illa.—"I have no objection to offer to him; but the young man is not to come before my eyes until then."

Ille.—"Ah, thou art as obstinate as the Rügen geese! Well, have it thy own way, child. And now to Stramehl!"

Still the Duke was hunting after them, through thick and thin, and roaring for the Knight at the top of his voice, till the wood re-echoed; and though some squires, who come up through the forest, declared that no carriage had passed their way, yet he continued his chase, feeling certain that no matter what by-path the knave had taken, yet he would assuredly come up with him at Saatzig.

So the next day he reached the castle, for it lay but ten miles from Camyn, but no knight was there. The Duke waited for two days, still no sign of him, so he amused the time by fishing, and making inquiries amongst all the neighbouring people about Sidonia, and so strange were the tales repeated by the simple, superstitious folk, that his Highness resolved to make a detour home by Marienfliess, just to get a passing glimpse of this devil's residence. Here he met a shepherd, who told many strange things, and swore that he had seen her many times flying out of the chimney on her broomstick, and, as the convent lay right before them, his Grace asked, which was Sidonia's chimney, and the carl pointed out the chimney with his hand—it was the fourth from the church there, where the smoke was rising. Whereupon, my Lord Duke shuddered, and went his way as quick as he could up the Vossberg. He knew not that upon that very day his brother, Duke Philip, had arrived at Marienfliess from Old Stettin, on his way to the Diet at New Stettin. The herald had been despatched by his Highness, some days before, to inform Sheriff Eggart Sparling of his approach, and that

his Highness and suite would arrive about noon. He was also to say the same to the nuns, particularly to Sidonia Bork.

So at mid-day my sheriff set off to the cloister, with the steward and the secretaries, and waited there in the nun's court-yard, for the arrival of the Duke, and a boy was placed in the mill to wave his cap the moment his Highness came in sight. Yet my Eggart was suffering terrible anguish all the time in his mind, for he thought, that if the Duke might bid him seize the devil's witch.

Soon the cry rose that the Duke was coming—his six coaches had just come in sight. Then the convent gate opened, and my hag appeared at the head of the entire sisterhood, all in their black robes and white veils; she the same, except that she wore the abbess veil whereon two golden keys were embroidered. Item, the white cat's-skin cape, which I have noticed before, was displayed upon her shoulders. Thus she came forth from the convent gate with all the sisters, two and two, and she threw up her eyes, and raised the hymn of St. Ambrose, just as the Duke and his six coaches drove into the court-yard, and the whole convent joining, they advanced thus singing to meet his Highness.

Now, his Highness was a meek man and seldom angry, but his brow grew black with wroth, when Sidonia, stepping up to the coach, bowed low, and in her cat's tippet—herself a cat in cunning and deceit—threw up her eyes hypocritically to heaven.

"How now," cried his Grace; "who the devil hath suffered you, Sidonia, to play the abbess over these virgins?"

To which my hag replied—

"Gracious Prince, ask these virgins here if they have not selected me as their abbess of their own free will, and they are now come to entreat your Highness to confirm the choice of their hearts."

"Marry," quoth the Duke, "I have heard enough of your doings from the neighbouring nobles and others. I know well how you made the poor abbess Magdalena bite the dust.—Item, now you forced these poor virgins to elect

you abdess through mortal and deadly fear. Sisters to the sisters, fear nothing—I, your Prince, command you to go; you were not elected this piece of sin and vanity—could not resist simply through fear of your lives?”

But the virgins looked down upon the ground, silent and trembled, while my sheriff plucked at his wide boots for the kerchief to wipe his face; he was up again; well how it would end, and the sweat was pouring from his brow. A second time he said, “Was it from fear?” When, named Agnest Kliest, not the sister, but no one dared to say another—

“In truth, gracious Prince, I am alone that we elected Sidonia Bork for three days and three nights when her bath-day came; by her name, and hearing it, said his Highness was destined

“Aye, I thought you were your truth and courage, I Item, Dorothea Stettin Sidonia Bork—it is for dispute my will, or my consent in consequence of the frontier. I have—now for justice!”

“Sparling, I command you, Prince, if this evil disturbance or storm be either yourself or the convent, to all she hath hitherto abdess to report day forth. maidens shall your sport

So the Prince obeyed!”

But my seemed so But when

CHAPTER XVII.

HIS HIGHNESS, DUKE PHILIP II. OF HIS MELANCHOLY BUT SUMPTUOUS

On the day of the jubilee, it happened that Anna Apenborg went to the brew-house, and there she saw a strange apparition of a woman. She runs and calls the other sisters; they all scamper out of their cells, and down the stairs. At the miracle, and behold there sits the three-headed devil's sprite, my hare is off, and never would be found again in the whole brew-house. Hereat the nuns each virgin has her opinion on the matter, and for just then, too, comes Sidonia forth,

and the cat, and the three begin their devil's squalls and wails, and the old witch-sing a hell psalm :—

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And now I must tell how his Grace had scarcely left Marienfließ and reached Saatzig (they were but a mile from each other) when he felt suddenly weak. He wondered much to find that his dear Lord brother, Duke Francis, had only left the castle two hours before. Item, that Jobst Bork had not arrived there, and no man knew whither the Knight had flown. Here the Duke grew so much worse, that his ministers earnestly entreated him to postpone the diet at New Stettin, and return home; for how could it please the knights and burgesses to see their beloved Prince in this sad extremity of suffering.

Hereupon his Highness replied, with the beautiful Latin words: "*officio mihi officio.*" (And after his death, these words were stamped on the burial-medals. Item, a rose, half-eaten by a worm, with the inscription, "*Ut rosa rodimur omnes;*" whereby many think allusion is made to the livid breath that passed over the flowers at Marienfließ, but I leave these things undecided.)

Summa.—His Highness proceeded to New Stettin, and decided all the boundary disputes amongst the nobles, &c. returned then to his court at Old Stettin, to hold the evangelical jubilee; but, by that time, all the doctors from far and near could do naught to help him; and though he lingered

and with it hews away at the padlock, until it falls to the ground. Whereupon, laughing scornfully, she went her way out into the road; and the new abbess could not remonstrate, for on Sidonia's return home (I forgot to say that, latterly, she had gone much about amongst the neighbouring nobles, even as his Highness observed, frightening them to death with her visits) she shut herself up again; and Anna Apenborg soon brings the news from Wolde,—“The Lady is praying;” and Anna, having privately slid under the window, found that it was even so.

So the whole convent shuddered; but no one dared to say a word, though each sister judged for herself what the praying betokened, without venturing to speak her surmise. But this time she did not pray for three days and three nights, only once in the week, when her bath-day came; by which, people suspected that his Highness was destined to a slower death than the other victims of her demoniac malice.

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Hereupon his Highness replied, with the beautiful Latin words: “*officio mihi officio.*” (And after his death, these words were stamped on the burial-medals. Item, a rose, half-eaten by a worm, with the inscription, “*Ut rosa roditur omnes;*” whereby many think allusion is made to the livid breath that passed over the flowers at Marienfließ, but I leave these things undecided.)

Summa.—His Highness proceeded to New Stettin, and decided all the boundary disputes amongst the nobles, &c. returned then to his court at Old Stettin, to hold the evangelical jubilee; but, by that time, all the doctors from far and near could do naught to help him; and though he lingered

and with it hews away at the padlock, until it falls to the ground. Whereupon, laughing scornfully, she went her way out into the road; and the new abbess could not remonstrate, for on Sidonia's return home (I forgot to say that, latterly, she had gone much about amongst the neighbouring nobles, even as his Highness observed, frightening them to death with her visits) she shut herself up again; and Anna Apenborg soon brings the news from Wolde,—“The Lady is praying;” and Anna, having privately slid under the window, found that it was even so.

So the whole convent shuddered; but no one dared to say a word, though each sister judged for herself what the praying betokened, without venturing to speak her surmise. But this time she did not pray for three days and three nights, only once in the week, when her bath-day came; by which, people suspected that his Highness was destined to a slower death than the other victims of her demoniac malice.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF THE FEARFUL DEATH OF HIS HIGHNESS, DUKE PHILIP II. OF POMERANIA, AND OF HIS MELANCHOLY BUT SUMPTUOUS BURIAL.

AFTER the before-mentioned festival of the jubilee, it happened that one day Anna Apenborg went to the brew-house, which lay inside the convent walls (it was one of Sidonia's praying days), and there she saw a strange apparition of a three-legged hare. She runs and calls the other sisters; whereupon they all scamper out of their cells, and down the steps, to see the miracle, and behold there sits the three-legged hare; but when Agnes Kleist took off her slipper, and threw it at the devil's sprite, my hare is off, and never a trace of him could be found again in the whole brew-house or in the whole convent court. Hereat the nuns shuddered, and each virgin has her opinion on the matter, *but speaks it not*; for just then, too, comes Sidonia forth,

with old Wolde and the cat, and the three begin their devil's dance, while the cat squalls and wails, and the old witch-hag screams her usual hell psalm:—

“Also kleien and also kratzen,
Meine Hunde and meine Katzen.”

Next day, however, the poor virgins heard to their deep sorrow what the three-legged hare betokened, even as they had suspected; for the cry came to the convent that his Grace, good Duke Philip, was dead, and the tidings ran like a signal-fire through the people, that this kind, wise, just Prince, had been bewitched to death. (Ah! where in Pomerania land—yea, in all German fatherland—was such a wise, pious, and learned Prince to be found. No other fault had he but one, and that was not having, long before, burned this devil's witch, this accursed sorceress, with fire and faggot.)

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some months, yet, from the first, he knew that death was on him; for nothing could appease the tortures he suffered in his breast, even as all the others whom Sidonia had murdered, and finally, on the 3d day of February, 1618, at ten of the clock, he expired—his age being forty-four years, six months, and six days. And the corpse presented the same signature of satan, though his Grace's sickness had differed in some particulars from that of Sidonia's other victims. To this appearance of the princely corpse I myself can testify, for I beheld it, along with many others, when it lay in state in the great-hall.

On the 19th of March following, the princely ceremony of interment took place. Let me see if my tears will permit me to describe it:—

After the deputies from the three honourable estates had assembled—the Stettin, the Wolgastian, and the ecclesiastical—in the castle-church, with the Princes of the blood, the nobles, knights, and magnates of the land, three cannons were fired; and at nine of the clock in the evening, the princely corpse was carried first into the count's chamber, then to the knight's chamber, from thence to the grand state-hall, by torch-light, by twenty-four nobles, and from that to the castle square, which was entirely covered with black cloth. Here it was laid down, and sixty students from the university of Grypswald, and forty boys from the town-school, sung the burial psalms from their books; while, at intervals, the priests chanted the appointed portions of the liturgy; after which all the bells of the town began to toll, and the swan song was raised, "Now in joy I pass from earth."—Whereupon the nobles lifted up the bier again, and the procession moved forwards. And could my gracious Prince have looked out through the little window above his head, he would have seen not only the blessed cross, but also his dear town, from street to tower, covered with weeping human faces; for the procession passed on through the main street, across the coal-market, through castle-street, into the crane-court—all which streets were lined with the princely soldateska, who also, each man, carried a torch in his hand, besides the group of regular torch-bearers in the process. Windows, roofs, towers, presented one living

mass of human heads all along the way. And the order was thus:—

1. The song-master, *cum choro*—item, the Rector, *pædagogis*, with his collegis.

2. The honourable ministerium from all the three states.

3. The Duke's trumpeters and drummers, with instruments reversed, and drums covered with crape.

4. The rector magnificus, and the four deacons of the university of Grypswald, among whom came Dr. Joel.

5. The land-marshal, with his black marshal's staff, alone; then the pages, three and three, in mourning cloaks, and faces covered with black taffety up to their noses.

6. The court-marshal, and the marshals of the three states—item, the ambassadors, and other high officials of foreign princes, &c.

7. Twelve knights, in full armour, upon twelve horses; each knight bearing his standard, and each horse covered entirely with black cloth, and having the arms of his rider embroidered on the forehead-piece, and on the two sides was led by a noble on foot.

The supreme court-marshal followed these, his drawn sword covered with crape, in his hand, the point to the ground.

Next the chancellor, with the seals covered with crape, and laid upon a black velvet cushion.

The princely corpse, borne by twenty-four nobles, on a bier covered with black velvet, and beneath a bluish-velvet canopy embroidered on all sides with the arms of his Grace's illustrious ancestors, with all their helmets, shields, devices, and quarterings, gorgeously represented in gold and silver. Item, on each side, twelve nobles, with lighted wax torches, from which streamers of black crape floated, and twelve halberdiers, with halberds reversed.

The last poor faded trefoil of our dear fatherland, namely, the serene and illustrious Princes, Dukes, and Lords—Francis, Ulrich, and Bogislaff, the princely brothers of Pomerania—all in long velvet mantles, and their faces covered with black crape up to the eyes.*

* Note of Duke Bogislaff XIV.—The three accompanied him to the grave; but who will walk mourner beside my bier? Ah! that long ere this I had lain calmly in my coffin, and looked up from the little window to my Lord, and rested in the God of my salvation! Amen.

His Princely Highness, Duke Philip Julius of Wolgast—the last of his name—and, like his cousins, wearing crape over his face to the eyes.

The honourable chapter of Camyn.

The councillors, *medici*, and other officers.

The chamberlain, knights, and pages of the princely widow's household.

The princely widow herself, with all her ladies, in long black silk mantles, their faces covered with black taffety up to the eyes, and accompanied by their Graces, the Elector of Brandenburg and the Duke of Mechlenburg.

The princely widow, Hedwig, the bereaved spouse of Ernest Ludovic of blessed memory—who was doomed to follow her whole illustrious race to the grave—conducted by Duke William of Courland, and Henry of Mangerson, ambassador from Brunswick.

The Countess von Eberstien, and Baroness von Putbus, with the ladies in waiting to her Princely Highness.

The noble ladies and maids of honour, amongst whom came Diliaua Bork.

Burgomasters, sheriffs, and council of the good town of Old Stettin.

Trumpeters and drummers, as before, and another song-master, *cum choro*, as at the beginning; and so closed the procession.

And how can I ever forget the lamentations that broke forth from all the people, as the princely bier approached—men, women, children, all sobbed and wept, as if indeed their own father lay there, and turned their torches down to view the blessed body better, from the windows and the towers (for mostly all the people carried torches). Then arose such a lamentation and cry as if no comfort more was left for them upon earth, only in heaven must they look for it; and as I stood in the coal-market, leaning my shoulder against a post, and heard this great cry of a whole people, and saw the flashing torches all bent upon this one point in the dark midnight. Behold the bright gold crucifix on the coffin glittered as if in the clear light of the sun; and the blaze of the torches was reflected from the black concave of heaven, so that a glory seemed to rest around and above

the bier, and all shone and glittered in that radiant circle, so that it was a pleasure and a wonder to gaze upon.

Thus through sin and sorrow loometh,
Light of light from God that cometh,
Shining o'er life's saddest night.
For His glory ever stayeth,
On the soul that weeps and prayeth;
May the words that Jesu sayeth
Guide us onward towards that light!
Amen!

The procession now returned again to the castle square, and from thence to the chapel.

Now when the coffin was laid down before the altar, and all the twelve knights with their standard gathered round it, my esteemed godfather, Dr. Cramer, advanced up the nave to the altar, chanting the Kyrie Eleison, and all the twelve knights lowered their standards upon the coffin, and beat their breasts, crying out—"Kyrie Eleison!" which cry was caught up by the whole congregation, and they likewise—nobles, priests, people, prince, peasant, men, women, children—all smote their breasts and cried out, "Kyrie Eleison!" so that my blessed godfather, his voice failed through weeping, and three times in vain he tried to speak.

After the sermon, the coffin was lifted up and lowered into the vault, and the signet-ring of his Highness broken by the Land-Marshal, and flung upon the coffin. But the twelve standards were set down by the altar, and the Marshal presented his staff to Bishop Francis, now the serene and illustrious reigning Duke of Pomerania; and the Supreme Court-Marshal delivered up the sword, and the Chancellor the seals to his serene Highness, and so this mournful ceremony terminated.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW JOBST BORK AND HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER ARE FORCED AT LAST INTO THE "OPUS MAGICUM."—ITEM, HOW HIS HIGHNESS, DUKE FRANCIS, APPOINTS CHRISTIAN LUDECKE HIS ATTORNEY-GENERAL, TO BE WITCH-COMMISSIONER OF POMERANIA.

Now my Jobst, guessing well what was in store for him if he remained at the ducal court, ordered his horses to be ready harnessed by four of the clock, on the morning after the funeral, that he might get clear off with his daughter before my Lord Duke knew anything of the matter. But his Highness knew better than that, for just as the Knight and his daughter were stepping into the coach, four of the Duke's equerries sprang forth and seized the horses' heads, while four pages rushed down the castle steps, and informed the Knight that he must accompany them with his daughter back to the castle, and up to the private apartment of his Grace, for that the Duke had a word to say to him before his departure. What could my Jobst do? He must take his Deliana out of the coach again, and follow the pages through the castle up to the Duke's quarters, which were filled with all beautiful things, statues and paintings, &c. from Italy; and his private room was decorated with the finest pieces of sculpture. So here they find his Grace and Dr. Joel seated at a table, with the wine-can before them, for they had sat up all night discoursing.

And when my Jobst enters with his sour face, holding his daughter by the hand, the Duke calls out—

"Marry, brave vassal, why so sour? *I* might well look sour, since you and your little daughter lately chose to play blind-man's-buff with your lawful Prince, making a mock of him. But I pardon you, and hope you have come to your senses since. Come, sit down; drink my

health in the wine cup. I trow this wine will please your palate."

But Jobst excused himself: "He never drank so early." Whereupon the Duke continued—

"Well, as you please; but, good Jobst, you must be harder than a stone, if you refuse now to assist me in binding this accursed witch of Marienfiess, when you see this last evil which she has done, and how all the weeping land mourns for its Prince. Will you and your little daughter, this virgin, not deliver me and my ancient race from so great and terrible a foe? What say ye, brave Jobst? Come, sit down beside your afflicted Prince, you and your little daughter, and tell me what help and comfort ye mean to bring me in my sore grief and sorrow. Speak, Jobst; ah! say was ever Prince like unto this Prince—and yet childless, childless, as we are all! Have pity on my noble, ancient race, or, even as he lamented on his death-bed, 'Pomerania will pass in a little while into stranger hands!'"

Now my Jobst, who had sat down with his daughter on a couch near the table, got the dry sheep's-cough in his throat again, and, in his embarrassment, snuffed out the candle; but, making a great effort, at last said—

"His Grace must be resigned, who could withstand the will of God? Yet he must say, in all honesty, that he had talked to many persons about the matter, and some said it was folly and nonsense, and there could be no reason in it. Others, amongst whom was Dr. Cramer, said, if not folly, yet it was a dangerous business to body and soul, and ought not to be attempted."

But my Jobst grows disturbed, and at last says, "Well, then, I must speak out the truth. My child is not the pure virgin whom ye seek. I mean in her thoughts, for she has already been betrothed to a bridegroom."

At this the Duke clapped his hand to his forehead and sighed: "Then my last hope has perished?" Item; the magister was quite thunderstruck. But Diliانا, who blushed to her finger-ends while her father spoke, started from the couch, seized the hand of my gracious Lord, and exclaimed:

"Be calm, my Lord Duke, my father hath said this but to free me, as he thinks, from this dungeon business. But

even against him I must defend my honour, for in truth my soul has been ever pure from all vain or sinful lusts, even as it is written (Tobias iii.) And though my father has proposed a bridegroom to me, yet up to this day I have constantly rejected him, partly for the sake of my poor grandmother, whose ghost admonished me, and partly that I might serve your gracious Highness as a pure and honourable virgin."

This hearing so rejoiced the Duke, that he kissed her hand; but the fair young virgin, when she saw her father rise up and walk hither and thither in great agitation, began to weep, and ran to throw herself on his neck, sobbing forth: "Comfort yourself, dear father, it could not be otherwise, for when you uttered such hard words of your daughter, what could I do but defend my honour, even against my own earthly father? Ah, dear father! it was the cruellest word your little daughter ever heard from you in her life—but one little kiss, and all will be right again!"

The poor Knight now fairly sobs like a child, and at last stammers out: "Well then, you must let me be present; if the devil takes my child, let him take me too along with him. I would rather be with my little daughter in hell, than without her in heaven."

"Good Knight," answered Joel, "that may not be, only three can be present, the Duke, your daughter, and myself. I handle the intellectual vinculum or the conjuration. Diliانا takes the elementary vinculum, as dove's blood, the blood of the field-mouse, virgin wax, and the censers, in her pure hands, and the Duke holds the astral vinculum, and questions the spirit."

Still my Jobst answers: "It may not be, unless I am present." And the strife continued in this wise for a good space, until it was at last agreed upon that the Knight should keep watch before the door with his drawn sword during the conjuration, and that in autumn, when the sun entered Libra they would begin the great work.

Jobst now rose to take his leave, but his little daughter, Diliانا, stood awhile silent, then blushed, looked upon the ground, and spoke at last:—

"My Lord Duke, will your Grace make my father

promise upon his knightly word, never to bring the young noble, George Putkammer, whom he has destined for my husband, into my presence from this day forth until after I have questioned the spirit. For I have a liking for the young Knight, and I am but a poor, weak thing, like our mother Eve and all other women, who knows what thoughts might rise in my heart, if I beheld his face or listened to his entreaties? and then the whole good work would come to nought, or perchance I might repent it my life long. I would therefore now rather go to Stramehl, where I can pray and become strong in spirit, so that perchance I shall find favour in the sight of the angel of God, as Hagar the handmaid of Abraham in the desert."

Then the beautiful child folded her hands, and looked up to heaven with such trust and innocence, that all were moved, and the Knight pledged his word to the Duke; after which he pressed his little lamb to his heart, and then both of them left the chamber of his Highness.

Now the Duke at last was joyful, for he had hope in the great work, and fell upon his knees with the magister to pray God for mercy upon himself, his race, and the young virgin. Item; promised by his honour to seek out and burn all the witches in the land, that so the kingdom of God might be built up, and the kingdom of the prince of this world sink to ruin and utter destruction. And on the following morning, he sent for Christian Ludecke (brother to the priest who had been bewitched to death) appointed him special witch-commissioner of the kingdom, and bade him search throughout the length and breadth of the land, and wherever he found one of these evil and accursed sorceresses, to burn her for the honour and glory of God.*

"Let him show no mercy towards this hell-brood of Satan, for the devil lately had become so powerful everywhere, but especially in dear Pomerania-land, that, if not prevented, he would soon pervert the whole people, and turn them away from the pure and blessed evangelical doctrine. Still he must have them all tried fairly before the sheriff's court

* An equally notorious witch-finder was one Hopkins of England. See "Sir Walter Scott's Letters upon Demonology and Witchcraft."

ere he tortured or burned. His brother of blessed memory had too long delayed the burning, therefore he must now be the more diligent; and, by next autumn, he trusted, with the help of God, to be able to burn Sidonia herself."

Hereupon, my Ludecke wondered much that his Grace should be so confident about burning Sidonia, but answered bravely: "All should be done as his Highness wished; for since the cruel death of his poor brother, the priest, his motto was—'Torture! burn! kill!' But would to God that his Highness could bind Sidonia's Familiar first, for he was a powerful spirit, every one said; and could not this learned magister exorcise him? The rumour went that he meant so to do." But his Grace rebuked such curiosity, and answered coldly: "He could not tell how the magister meant to proceed; but his (Ludecke's) duty lay clear before him, let him do it."

Hereupon, my Ludecke looked rather confused, and took his leave. And soon after, the witch-burnings began in such fearful rise through the land, that in many parishes six or seven poor women, young or old, innocent or guilty, it was all the same—yea, even children of ten to twelve years were yearly burned to powder; and by the wonderful providence of God, it happened that the burnings began first in Marienfliess, and truly with one of Sidonia's friends, the old pug-nosed hag of Uchtenhagen, whom I have mentioned before, and that she visited Sidonia frequently; and this was the way of it:—One day, Sidonia beat this same Pug-nose most unmercifully with the broomstick, and chased her out into the convent square, still striking at her, which sight, however, the nuns little heeded, for this *spectaculum* was now so common that they only thanked their stars it was not their turn, and passed on. But Anna Apenborg met her by the well, and as the horrible old Pug-nose was screeching and roaring at the top of her voice, and cursing Sidonia, she asked, "What now?—what ailed her?—what had she and the lady Sidonia been quarrelling about?" And some others came up, principally the wenches from the kitchen, to hear what all the roaring was for. Whereupon, pug-nose told her story: "The cursed lady-witch had bid her lately go to the holy sacrament, and when she received

the blessed wafer, to take the same out of her mouth privately, and bring it to her at Marienfliess, wherewith to feed her Familiar, whom she kept in the form of a toad. At this blasphemy she (Pug-nose) remained silent, for she feared the hag and her anger; but, on the Sunday, she swallowed the bread, as other Christian people; whereupon Sidonia sends for her, pretending she had spinning to give her, but no sooner had she entered the room, than the terrible she-devil asked for the wafer; so she confessed she had swallowed it. How could she commit such a horrible sacrilege? At this, the accursed witch ran at her with the broomstick, and beat her all the way down into the court.

This story soon spread over the convent, and the priest's wife told it to the fish-seller, who came up there that day, bidding him run to her brother-in-law, Christian Ludecke, with the news of the last sorcery going on in the convent.

This was a fine hearing to the witch-commissioner, who resolved instantly to seize Pug-nose, and begin the burnings in the parish of Marienfliess, to frighten Sidonia, and keep her in check until autumn. So he took the executioner, with all the torture instruments, and a scriba along with him in the carriage, and set off for Uchtenhagen, where the old hag dwelt.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW CHRISTIAN LUDECKE BEGINS THE WITCH-BURNINGS IN
MARIENFLIESS, AND LETS THE POOR DAIRY-MOTHER DIE
HORRIBLY ON THE RACK.

Now it happened about this time in Marienfliess that the dairy-mother (I have tried to remember her name, but in vain, she was daughter to Trina Bergen I know, as is noticed *libro secundo*) sold a kid to the bailiff, Brose* Bucher, grandson of that Jabel Bucher, who was going to burn old Wolde years before, which kid soon grew sick and died. Item, the bailiff's wife had quarrelled with the dairy-mother (ah, if I could remember her name) about the price, the

* Ambrosius.

said wife assured her husband the bailiff, that the dairy-mother had bewitched the kid to death out of spite, because she would not give her as much as she asked for it. This he easily credited, and talked of it to the country people, and now the old hag must be an evil witch, her mother indeed he knew had been in bad repute likewise, for how but by witchcraft could the poor little kid have died off all of a sudden. So all the malicious women's tongues were set going with their spinning wheels, and this poor worthy dairy-mother, whose piety, charity, and kindness I have noticed already, was in a few days the common talk of the parish.

About this time, Beatus Schact, the convent chaplain was summoned to baptize a shepherd's dying child, and he had just packed up his book, when he observed through the window a wagon, drawn by four horses, coming down the Stargard-street, with the sound of singing from the persons within. Foremost on the wagon sit three official looking personages, in scarlet mantles, and one of them bears a red banner, with a black cross thereon, in his hand. Behind them are three women bound, and the psalm which they chant is the death-psalm—"Now pray we to the Holy Ghost." As the priest looks upon this strange sight, *his dato*, never seen in Pomerania-land, the wagon halts close by the church wall, and one of the men with the red mantles sounded a trumpet, so that all the people run to see what was going forward, and the priest runs likewise. Item; all the nuns gather thick at the convent gate, and peep over others shoulders; for people think it must be pickelherring, or some such strolling mummers come to exhibit to the folk during the evening.

Meanwhile, a peasant observes that his own sister, Ussel, wife to a peasant at Pegelow, was one of the three poor wretches who sat there with bound hands. Whereupon he springs to the wagon, and asks with wonder—"Ussel what brings thee here?" But, for answer she only pours forth tears and lamentations. However, Commissioner Ludecke (for you may well guess it was he with his witch-wagon) would not let them discourse further; but bid the peasant stand back, unless he wished the executioner to seize him and tear his hide for him; then speaks—

"Know, good people, that our serene and gracious Prince and Lord, the illustrious and eminent Duke Francis George of Stettin, Pomerania, having heard that the devil is loose in our dear fatherland, and carries on his demon work, especially amongst the women folk, tempting them into all horrible sorceries, filthiness, and ungodly deeds, has appointed me, Christian Lukecke, (brother of your late pastor) to be witch-commissioner for the whole kingdom, that so I may purge the land by fire, bringing these devil's hags to their just punishment, for the great glory of God, and terror of all godless sorceresses, witches, and others in this or any other place. Ye are also to name me the honourable attorney-general, which also I am."

Here the peasant cried out—

"But his sister Ussel, who sat there bound upon the cart, was no witch, and every one knew that. His worship might take pity on her tears and let her free. She had a husband, and four innocent little children likewise, who would take care of them now?"

"No, no," shouted Ludecke; "true sign that she is a witch since she howls! Had she a good conscience wherefore should she do it? He came to know whether there was a witch, perchance, also in Marienfließ?"

Here the bailiff's wife nudged her husband in the side with her elbow, and whispers—"The dairy-mother," but the carl would not utter a word. So she screamed out herself—

"Aye, there is the dairy-mother of the parish, a horrible old witch, as all the town knows."

And here I have just bethought me of the name of the dairy-mother. It was Benigna Ficht, she was widow of old Ficht, the peasant.

At this several voices cried out, "No, no;" but she screamed out—

"Yea, yea! it was true; and her mother before her had been an evil witch, and had let witches sit in her cellar, so that she must be a witch herself."*

* This idea runs through all the witch trials:—"Woe to the woman whose mother had been accused of witchcraft, she seldom got off with her life!"

This pleased the blood-thirsty attorney-general, and he asked, if the bailiff were present. And when my Brose stepped forward with a profound bow, Ludecke went on—

“Was this the case about the dairy-mother? Was she, in truth, an evil witch?”

Whereupon his malicious wife nudged him again with her elbows in the side, till he answered—“Aye, the people say so.”

Ludecke continued—“Were there more witches in the place beside the dairy mother?”

The fellow was silent and seemed disturbed, until being menaced by the commissioner with all temporal and eternal punishment if he spoke not the truth, my Brose stepped up upon the wheel, and whispered in his ear, while he cast a frightened glance at the convent gate—

“Ay, there is another, one of the convent sisters called Sidonia Bork, she is the very devil itself.”

But Ludecke seemed as though he could not believe him—

“It was impossible; he had always heard that this lady was a model of all goodness, piety, and wisdom, who had healed the sheriff himself of some great sickness;” but he squinted all the time over at the convent gate, where the black robes were crowding, and then whispered the bailiff—“Is Sidonia amongst them think you?”

My carl squinted likewise at the gate, then whispered back again in his ear—“No, Sidonia is not there, as far as I can see.”

Meanwhile the *pastor loci*, a simple, timid little man, as I have said, got up all his courage, and feeling it to be his duty to defend his parishioner, the poor dairy-mother, advanced to the wagon, saying—

“Would his worship the lord attorney-general permit him a few words. He was the priest of the parish, had married the widow of his late brother, as no doubt his worship had heard by letters from his dear sponse. His duty compelled him to take the part of this poor dairy-woman, whose character evil tongues had blackened to his worship, for she was the most pious person in all the parish, and every evening brought her spinning along

with other pious women to his house, to hear the blessed word of God, and be examined in the catechism—any one who knew her pious, honest life could not believe this of her.”

“So much the more likely she is a witch,” cried Ludecke; “they are all hypocrites. Look at that pious and honest trio in the cart, how they cast down their eyes and look so innocent, and yet they were three of the vilest witches; for what made them look down, if it were not their evil conscience?”

Now it happened, that just then old Wolde came limping by, with a new broom which she had bought in the town for Sidonia, no doubt to lay under the table, as she was wont; so Brose whispered—

“Yea, yea, there was one hobbling by with the broom, and she was the worst of all, Sidonia’s servant, old Wolde.”

Whereupon the commissioner thought within himself, how could he terrify Sidonia more than by seizing her maid, and sending her to the rack and the stake. So he bid the executioner lay hold on that lame hag with the broom, and fling her into the cart along with the others. This was soon done; for, though old Wolde made some resistance, and screeched and roared, yet she was thrown down upon the ground, bound, and flung into the nest in spite of all.

Anna Apenborg saw all this from the convent gate, and, to make friends with Sidonia, she ran to the refectory with the news of Ludecke’s doings. Whereupon Sidonia, who knew the coward knave well, seized her broomstick and ran down the steps, beating the nuns right and left about the ears, who were gathered thick and black around the gate, so that they all flew screaming away, and then presented herself, glowing with fury, and brandishing her broomstick, to the eyes of the terrified Ludecke, whereat all the four hags cried out from the wagon—

“Help us, O Lady Prioress! Help us, O Lady Prioress!”

And Sidonia screamed in answer, “I come, I come!” swung her broomstick and called out—“Wait, thou accursed quill-driver, wait!”

But my Ludecke no sooner saw her rushing at him, with

her thin, white hair flying about her face, than he jumped from the cart, and took to his heels so fast that nothing could be seen of him through the dust he raised, but the bright nails of his shoes, as he scampered away to the furze bushes. Item; followed the *scriba*, and lastly the executioner, to the great amusement of the common folk, who stood round the wagon, and now laughed and gibed at the authorities. Then the aforementioned peasant jumped upon the cart, and cut the cords that bound his sister, Ussel, and the others. Whereat they likewise took to their heels and went hither and thither, to hide themselves in the wood, while old Wolde returned calmly with Sidonia to the convent, and two of the hags got clear off, and were fed by their kinsfolk, I take it, for months in the pits and hollow trees where they had sheltered themselves, for never a trace could Ludecke get of them more, though he searched day and night in every village, and house, and nook, and corner. But Pug-nose, who was half blind with fright, in place of running away, run straight up into the very mouth of the executioner, who was crouching with the clerk his master behind a thorn bush.

Eh, how she roared when Master Hansen stretched out his arm and caught hold of her by the coat! Then he bound her again, and so she was carried to the sheriff's house, for Ludecke had set up his quarters with Sheriff Sparling, and that same day he resolved to open the criminal commission *nomine serenissima* with Pug-nose.

Summa.—The hag confessed upon the rack, to Sidonia being a witch, and named several other women besides. So my Ludecke has to write off for another executioner and seven bailiffs, fearing his own would have more work on their hands than they could do. And every day messengers were dispatched to Stargard with bundles of indictments and writs. And in the sheriff's-court, day after day, there was nothing but trying witches and condemning them, and torturings, and burnings. And though many saved themselves by flight, and others got off with only a sharp reprimand, yet in four weeks no less than four wretched women were burned close by Sidonia's window, so that she see them *see them* to powder.

And Pug-nose was the first whom the blood-thirsty knave ordered to be burned (I say nothing against that, for it is all right and according to law), but the bloodhound went rather beyond the law sometimes, thinking to terrify Sidonia, for it was the custom to build a sort of little chamber at top of the pile within which the wretched victims were bound, so that they could be stifled by the smoke before the flames reached them. But he would allow of no little chamber, and had a stake erected on the summit of the pile, round which an iron chain was fastened, and to the end of this chain the miserable criminal: and truly many hearts were moved with pity when Pug-nose was fastened to the stake, and the pile was lit, seeing how she ran right and left to escape the flames, with the chain clattering after her, in her white death-shift, stitched with black, which Sidonia gave out she made for her out of pure Christian charity—screaming horribly all the while, till finally the fire blazed up over her, and she fell down a blackened heap.

Three weeks after, three more women were burned upon three separate piles, on the same day, and at the same hour, straight in view of Sidonia's window; and they likewise each one, were bound to the chain, and their screams were heard plainly as far as Stargard. And for four miles round, the smell of roast human flesh was plainly perceptible, which, as every one knows, has quite a different odour from any other burned flesh. Yet the death of the poor dairy-mother was still more horrible if possible, and though it may well make my tears to flow again, yet I will relate it. But tears here, tears there, what will it help?

So to begin:—

My worthy father-in-law, M. Beutzius, formerly court-chaplain, but who had lately been made general-superintendent, by Duke Francis, for the reason before-mentioned, went about this time to attend the synod, at the little town of Jacobshagen; and on his way home, in the morning about eleven o'clock (for he had slept at Stargard), while passing the court-house at Marienfliess, had his attention attracted by two young peasant girls, who were standing before a window wringing their hands and screaming as piteously, as if the world itself were going to be destroyed.

He stopped his coach instantly, listened, and then distinctly heard groans proceeding from the little room; but the sound was so hollow and unnatural, that two pigs that were rooting up the earth near him, lifted up their snouts. As soon as they heard it, they started off in fright, then stopped and stood listening and trembling in the distance. So my worthy father-in-law called out, while his hair stood on end with terror, "Children, for the love of God, what is the matter?" But the poor girls, for their sobbing and weeping, could utter nothing but "Our mother! our poor mother!" Upon which he sprang from the coach, advanced closer, and asked: "What is it, poor girls? what has happened?"

"Oh, sir!" answered one at last, "our poor innocent mother has been lying two whole hours on the rack within there, and the savage knaves won't leave their breakfast to come and release her!"

So the good man looked shudderingly through the window, and there beheld the unfortunate dairy-mother lying bound half naked upon a plank, so that her white hair swept the ground. And her hands were bound round her neck, and under each arm lay a coal-pan, from which a blue flame ascended as if sulphur were burning therein, so that her arms were burned quite black already.

"My God! where is the executioner?" screamed my father-in-law, and when the girl sobbing, pointed to the tavern, the old man ran off as quick as he was able the whole way to the place, where the executioner and his fellows sat by the beer-jug, laughing and making merry. And when he arrived, the old man's breath was well nigh gone, and he could scarcely tell of the horrors he had seen and heard; but when he had ended, the executioner answered he could not help it. "His worship, the attorney-general, was at breakfast likewise at the court-house, and had the keys. When he was done he would send for them." The worthy priest then ran back again all the way from the tavern to the court-house, as quick as he could, but stopping his ears the while as he came nearer, not to hear the groans of the poor dairy-mother, and the screams of her daughters, who were hither and thither round the

walls, as if indeed the wretched girls had quite lost their senses. And at last he reached the sheriff's quarter, where another kind of roaring saluted his ears—I mean the shouts and laughter of the drunken noisy crew within.

For the ferocious blood-hound, Christian Ludecke, had invited friends over from Old Stettin, and there they all sat, Sheriff Sparling too, amongst them, round the table like coupled hounds, for a fine metal wire had been passed through all their ears as they sat drinking, so that none could go away without having his ear torn by the wire. Or if one of the beastly drunken pigs swelled so much, that he fell under the table, and his ear tore in consequence, it was a source of great laughter and merriment to the other pigs.

When the old man beheld this, he thought that between grief, anger, and horror, he would have fallen to the ground. And for a long while he stood gazing at the scene, unable to utter a word, whilst they roared to him to take his place, and shoved the wine-can over: "But he must have his ear pierced first like the others;" for the good old laws were in force here, and he must drain the cup at a draught till his breath was gone, and his two cheeks remained full—this was the true Pomeranian draught.

At this beastly proposition, the pious priest crossed himself, and at last got out the words—"Mercy for the criminal! mercy for the poor dairy-mother!"

At this, the attorney-general, Christian Ludecke, clapped his hand upon his forehead, exclaiming, "'Fore God, it is true, I have let that cursed hag lie on the rack these two hours. I forgot all about her. Send to the executioner, and bid him release her. Let her rest for to-day."

"And you could forget a fellow-creature thus!" exclaimed the priest, with indignation. "Oh! you are more savage than a heathen, or the very brute beasts there without, who trembled at the groans of the poor martyr! yea, hell itself could not be more merciless!"

"What, thou cursed parson!" cried the commissioner, starting from his seat in fury. But just then, as he sprang up, the wire tore through his ear, and the red blood flowed down upon his fine white ruff, whereat the others burst

out into a yell of laughter, which increased the villain's fury ten times more.

"Now the damned hag should stay on the rack till night. What did people mean coming with begging prayers for the devil's brood? As well pray mercy for the devil himself—the reverend parson was very tender about his friends the witches." At which he laughed so loud that the roof rang, and all the others roared in chorus.

But the priest replied gravely: "I shall repeat every word you have uttered to his Highness the Duke, with a statement of how I found ye all employed, unless this instant you give orders to release the dairy-mother."

"Never! never!" shouted the blood-hound, and struck the table till the glasses rang. "What is it to thee, damned priest? I am witch-commissioner of Pomerania; and his Highness expressly charged me to show no mercy to these cursed devil's hags, therefore, I am ready to answer to God, the Prince, and my conscience, for what I do."

However, my worthy father-in-law had scarcely left the room, sighing deeply at his unsuccessful mission, when the coward despatched his *scriba* with the keys to release the dairy-mother; but it was too late—the horrible agony had already killed her; and when the hands of the corpse were unbound, both arms fell of themselves to the ground, out of the sockets.*

* Such scenes of satanic cruelty and beastly debauch, mingled together with the proceedings of justice, were very frequent during the witch-trials. How would it rejoice me if, upon contemplating this present age, I could exclaim with my whole heart,—“What progression—infinite progression—in manners and humanity!” But, alas! our modern laws, with their womanish feebleness, and sentimental whimperings, sin quite as much against a lofty and noble justice as those of earlier times, by their tyrannical and cannibal ferocity. And yet now, as then, *conscience* is appealed to as the excuse for all. Oh! conscience, conscience! how wilt thou answer for all that is laid upon thee! To-day, for example, it is a triumphal denial of God and thy Saviour Jesus Christ: a crime at which a Ludecke would have shuddered, even as we shudder now at his; and yet no sense of shame or disquietude seems to pass over thee, although by the Word of God thy crime is a thousand-fold greater than his. Matt. xii. 31; John viii. 24; Ephes. v. 6.

CHAPTER XX.

WHAT SIDONIA SAID TO THESE DOINGS.—ITEM, WHAT OUR LORD GOD SAID; AND, LASTLY, OF THE MAGICAL EXPERIMENT PERFORMED UPON GEORGE PUTKAMMER AND DILIANA, IN OLD STETTIN.

I THINK my blood-hound gained his end at last respecting Sidonia; for truly a terrible anguish fell upon her—a foretaste of that hell-anguish she would one day suffer, I take it; yet she only betrayed this terror by the disquietude of her bearing, and the uneasiness which she exhibited day and night; item, through an increase of her horrible hypocrisy, which grew more flagrant than ever; for now, standing or going, her eyes were turned up to heaven, and three or four times a day she compelled the nuns to attend prayers in the chapel. Yet when the news was brought her, that the coward knave, Christian Ludecke, had extolled her virtues himself to the bailiff, Brose, she concluded that he meant nothing serious with her. However, she continued sending Anna Apenborg diligently to the sheriff's house, to pick up all the gossip she could from the servants and others. And at length Anna brought word, that a maid at the court-house said, the *scriba* said, in confidence, that his Grace of Stettin said, Sidonia should be burned next autumn.

When Sidonia heard this, she turned as pale as a corpse, and her breath seemed stifling, but, recovering herself soon, attempted to smile, turned up her eyes to heaven, and, sighing, said, "He that walketh innocently, walketh surely" (Prov. x. 9). And then rang for the nuns to go and pray in the chapel. Yet that same day, when she heard of the fearful death of the dairy-mother, she turned her hypocritical mouth to another tune, raged, and stormed, and abused the blood-thirsty savage of a commissioner, who had let the most pious person of the whole parish die so horribly on

the rack: then bid the whole chapter assemble in her room, to state the matter to his Highness, for if these evil doings went on, not even the most innocent amongst them was safe from a like bitter death.

Whereupon Anna Apenborg, who had grown the bravest of all, since she found that Sidonia could not do without her, said: "But, gracious Lady Prioress, you yourself accused the dairy-mother of witchcraft, when you came back from Stettin, and found the poor priest in his coffin!" which impertinence, however, my hag so resented, that she hit Anna a blow on the mouth, and exclaimed in great wrath, "Take that, for thy impudence, thou daring peasant wench!" But, calming herself in a moment, added, "Ah, good Anna, is it not human to err?—have you never been deceived yourself?"

Summa.—The nuns must write and sign. Whereupon my Ludecke, out of fear of Sidonia's revenge, withdrew to Saatzig, after the death of the dairy-mother, from thence to Dölitz, Pyritz, and so on, still faithful to his motto: "Torture! burn! kill!" for he found as many witches as he pleased in every place; so that the executioner, Curt Worger, who, when he first arrived at Marienfliess, wore nothing but a sorry grey mantle, now appeared decked out like a noble, in a bright scarlet cloak; item, a hat with a red feather, a buff jerkin, and jack-boots with gilded spurs; neither would he sit any longer on the cart with the witches, but rode by the side of the commissioner, on a jet-black horse, which carried a red flag between its ears; and his drawn sword rested upon his shoulder. Thus they proceeded through the land; and upon entering a town, the executioner always struck up a Psalm, in which not only the attorney-general and his secretary frequently joined, but also the wretched witches themselves who sat in the cart.

And though the Duke received complaints daily, not only from the priest Beutzius, and the convent, but from every town where the special commission was held, of the horrible cruelties practised and permitted by his Grace's officials; yet the Duke remained firm in his determination to root out witchcraft, by these or any means; for whatever

the ferocious blood-hound, Ludecke, prated to his Highness, the Duke believed, and therefore would say nothing against any of his acts. But our Lord God had a great deal to say against them; for observe all the signs and wonders that appeared about this time through different parts of the land, which brought many a one to serious reflection.

First, some women, who were cooking meal and pease at Pyritz, found the mess changed into blood; baked bread, likewise, the same. And a like miracle happened at Wriezen also, for the deacon, Caspar Rohten, preached a sermon on the occasion, which has since been printed. Item, at Stralsund there was a red rain—yea, the whole sea had the appearance as if it were turned into blood; and some think this was a foreshadowing of the great and real blood-rain at Prague; and of all the evils which afterwards fell upon our whole German fatherland. Next the news was brought to court, that, at the same hour, on the same night, strange and supernatural voices were heard at the following places, in Pomerania:—

1. W-edderwill, a house, as every one knows, close to Strahmehl, and the birth-place of Sidonia.

2. E-ggesin, a town near Uckermand, at the other end of Pomerania.

3. H-ohenmoeker, near Demmin.

4. P-yrizt, the town where the witch-burnings had raged the most cruelly.

5. O-derkrug, close to his Grace in Stettin.

6. M-arienfiess, where Sidonia defied man, and blasphemed God, and organised all the evil that fell upon the land.

Now when the Duke read this account he was filled with horror, that heaven itself should cry, "Woe;" for when he placed the initial letters of each town together, he observed, to his dismay, that they read: "Weh Pom—"*. Yet as the last syllable, *mern*, was wanting, the Duke comforted himself, and thought, "perhaps it is the other Pomerania, where my cousin Philip Julius rules, over which God has

* Weh is called Woe, and Pomerania, *Pommern* in the original.

the rack: then bid the whole c^o to state the matter to his w^o went on, not even a^t safe from a lik^e *out, alas! received the strange voices*

Whereupon of all, since her, said: cused th^e from S^o which hit w^o *the island of Usedom. These passages directly across the land. For the Duke still had some little comfort remaining, for yet the Duke was not wanting—people always wrote Pommern, therefore by this the All-merciful God showed there was an m, that is a man, of the noble Pomeranian house, whereby to build it up and make it flourishing again. To this faith he clung in his sore grief, and Doctor Joel further comforted him about the angel, saying that he would assuredly tell him what the sign denoted, and this m in particular, which was kept back from the word Pomerania. But the magister knew right well—as many others, though they would not tell the Duke—that the Lord God had spelled the word correctly; for the name in the Wendisch and Polish tongues is Pomorswa, spelt with but one m, and means a land lying by the sea, and therefore many of the old people still wrote Pomern for Pommern. Had the Duke, however, as well as his princely brothers, heard of the awful appearances which accompanied the voices in every place, methinks they would have despaired utterly. For the clouds gathered themselves into forms resembling each of the four princely Dukes in succession, as like as if a painter had drawn them upon the sky; thence they were, each lying on his black bier, from east to west, in the clear moonlight of heaven.*

And his Highness, Duke Francis, was the first, lying on his bier, with his hair combed *a la Nazerene*, as was his custom, and his face turned to the moon, behind which he presently disappeared.

Next came Duke Udalricus, and his face was so distinct that it seemed cut out of paper, lying there in his coffin; and he, too, sank behind the moon, and was seen no more.

Philip Julius of Wolgast was the third, and the blessed moon shone bright upon his black moustache in the coffin;

and, lastly—woe, alas! Whereupon night and darkness fell upon the sky.*

But these fearful signs were as carefully concealed from their Highnesses as if the whole people had conspired to keep the secret; besides, the figures were not observed at every place where the voices sounded. However, Doctor Joel himself came to the conclusion, in his own mind, that, after these open declarations from heaven, it would be quite useless to consult the angel. Nevertheless, to calm the mind of the Duke, he resolved to go through with the conjuration if possible, at least he might bind the hell-dragon of Marienfliess, and save others from her evil spells, if even the Duke and his illustrious race were already doomed.

Now, having cast Sidonia's nativity, he found that the time in which alone her powerful evil spirit or Familiar could be bound, coincided exactly with that in which the sun-angel might be made to appear; thus, the helpless hag could be seized at Marienfliess without danger or difficulty, at this precise hour and moment. So he determined to commence his conjuration at once by the magical blood-letting, and for this purpose wrote the following letter to Diliana, with which his Highness instantly despatched a horseman to Stramehl:—

† † †

JESUS!

"NOBLE AND PURE VIRGIN,—Having found, *ex navitate Sidonia*, that it is possible to bind her evil spirit just at the moment in which we three stand within the circle to question the sun-angel, we must seek out a brave youth in Marienfliess whom you trust, and who by nature is so sympathetical with you, that he will experience the same sensations in his body while there, precisely at the same moment in which they are excited in you at Old Stettin. This can be accom-

* Latin note of Bogislaff XIV.—"Tunc ego ipse, nonne? hoc nobis infelicibus bene taciturnitate nostrum cohibitum est; Elector Brandenburgiae sane omnia rapiet!" (Then I myself—is it not so? This was kept secret from us unfortunates. The Elector of Brandenburg will rob all.) Then in German he added:—"Yet the Lord is my light, of whom then shall I be afraid? Ah, that my poor soul, in truth, rested calm in heaven! For I am ready to be offered up like St. Paul (meaning through Wallenstein): 'Would that the time of my departure were at hand!'—2 Tim. iv. 6. Yea, come and take my heritage, George of Brandenburg, I am weary of this life."

relieved only by the magic bleeding, performed upon you both; therefore I pray you, in the name of his Highness, to communicate with such an one, if so be there is a youth in whom you place trust, and by the next new moon come with him to Old Stettin, where I shall perform the magic bleeding on you both, that no time may be lost in commencing this mighty work, which, by God's help, will save the land.

"God keep you. Pray for me!

"Your servant to command,

"Old Stettin, 19th June, 1618.

"M. JOEL."

This letter grieved the young virgin, for she saw the magister would not cease his importunities. Nevertheless, to show her obedience to his Highness, and by the advice of her cousin Bastien, she consented to undertake the journey. Bastien likewise offered willingly to go through the magic bleeding along with her, but the maiden declined, and wrote privately to George Putkammer at Pansin the following letter:—

"Be it known to you, Sir Knight, that his Highness of Stettin has solicited my aid in a mighty magic-work, and desired me to seek out a youth in whom I trust, that magister Joel of Grypswald may perform a magic bleeding upon us both. So I have selected you, and desire therefore to meet you on St. John the Baptist's day, by ten of the clock in the forenoon, at the castle of Old Stettin. But my father or Saatzig is to know nothing of the matter; and you must promise neither to look upon me, nor sigh, nor press my hand, nor speak of marriage, whether we be alone or not. In this I trust to your knightly honour and noble nature.

"Stramehl, 22d July, 1618.

"DILIANA BORK."

So on the appointed day Diliana arrived at the castle of Stettin, and his Highness was rejoiced to see her, and bade the magister, Joel, himself to bring all sorts of dainties for her refreshment, in order that the lacqueys might not be coming in and out, spying at what was going on. And immediately after, the court-marshal flung open the door a second time, and my young Knight appeared—marry, how handsome he looked—dressed just like a bridegroom! He wore a buff doublet, with sleeves of blue satin, bordered with scarlet velvet; scarlet hose brodered in gold—item, Spanish boots with gold spurs, and round his throat a ruff of the finest lace—item, ruffles of the same. So with his long

sword by his side he entered, carrying his plumed beaver in his hand; and truly he blushed up to his very ears when he beheld Diliانا seated there in her pomp and beauty, and he stammered and cast down his eyes upon his boots when the Duke addressed him, so that his Highness grew provoked, and exclaimed:—

“What the devil, young man! have you an evil conscience? Can you not look any one straight in the face?”

At this the young knight lifted his eyes boldly and fixed them upon his Grace, answering haughtily:—“My Lord Duke, I can look the devil himself straight in the face, if need be; but what is this comedy which you are about to play with me and this young maiden?”

This speech offended his Highness. “It was no mumming work they had in hand, but a grave and serious matter, which, as he did not understand, the magister would explain to him.”

So my magister began, and demonstrated the whole *opus theurgicum*; but the knight is as unbelieving as Jobst, and says:—

“But what need of the angel? Can we not do the business ourselves? My Lord Duke, it is now eleven o’clock; give me permission, and by this hour to-morrow morning Sidonia shall be here in a pig-sack. And long ago I would have done this of myself, or stabbed her with my dagger for her late evil deeds, if your Grace had not forbade me so to do at the burial of our gracious Lord, Duke Philip II. The devil himself must laugh at our cowardice, that we cannot seize an old withered hag whom a cowboy of ten years old would knock down with his left hand.”

To which his Highness answered: “You are fool-hardy, young man, to esteem so lightly the power of her evil spirit; for know that it is a mighty and terrible spirit, who could strangle you as easily as he has murdered others, for all your defiant speeches! Therefore we must conquer him by other means; and for this reason I look with hope to the appearance of the angel, who will teach us, perhaps, how to remove the spell from my illustrious race, which Sidonia’s inhuman malice has laid on them, making them to perish

childless off the face of the earth. If even you succeeded in seizing her, how would this help? She would revenge herself by standing there deaf and mute as a corpse, and would sooner be burned at the stake than speak one word that would remove this great calamity from our house."

Then the Knight said, "He would never consent that Dilliana should run the great danger of citing a spirit."

Which, when the maiden heard, she grew as red as the young Knight when he first entered, and said with a grave and haughty mien:—

"Sir Knight, who gave you any right over my words or works? There may be other men in whom I place trust as well as you; and speak but another word of the like nature, and I will prove it to you by my acts."

Marry, that was a slap on the mouth to my young Knight, who grew as red as scarlet, and cast down his eyes upon his boots, while M. Joel began to demonstrate the magic blood-letting to them as follows:—

"See here, young Knight, and you, fair virgin, here are two little boxes of white ivory, of the same size and weight; and see, within each of them is suspended a little magnet, both cut from the one loadstone, and round in a circle are all the letters of the alphabet. Now, let each of you take a little box, carry it delicately, and by its help you can converse with each other though you were a hundred miles apart. This symyathy between you is established by means of the magic blood-letting. I make an incision in each of your arms, placed together in the form of a cross, then touch the Knight's wound with the blood of the virgin, and the virgin's with the blood of the Knight, so will your blood be mingled; and then, if one of you press the wound on the arm, the other will feel the same pressure sympathetically on the arm at the same instant, though ye be ever so far removed from one another. Now suppose that you, fair maiden, feel a pressure suddenly on the wound in your arm, you place the magnet box thereon, and the needle will point of itself, by sympathy, to the letters necessary to form a word, which word will be the same as that found by the magnet of the Knight, who will likewise have the box on his arm at the same moment; thus ye can read each other's

thoughts instantaneously, and this results entirely from the laws of sympathy, as described by the renowned Abbot Johannes Trithemius, and Hercules de Sunde.

To all this my Knight made no answer, but seemed much disturbed. However, the magister ordered him to retire into the next chamber and remove his doublet. Item, he bade the young maiden likewise, to take off her robe, seeing that the sleeves were very tight. It was a blue silk boddice she had on, trimmed round the bosom with golden fringe, and a mantle of yellow silk embroidered in violets and gold. Now the maiden was angry at first with the magister for his request, but laughed afterwards, when she thought of Dorothea Stettin, and her absurdities with the doctor.

So she said, "Here, cut open my sleeve, it matters not. I have more dresses with me at my lodging." This my magister does immediately, and draws forth the beautiful arm white as a snow flake, throws the sleeve back upon the shoulder, and places Diliana with her face turned towards the window, on a seat which his Highness, the Duke, laid for her himself, while he exclaimed earnestly, "Now, Diliana, guard thy soul well from any evil thought!"

Hereupon the poor young virgin began to weep, and said: "Ah! my Lord Duke, I have indeed need to pray for support, but I will look up to the Lord my Saviour, whose strength is made perfect in my weakness. Now the young Knight may come, but let me not see him."

On this, the magister called in the young man, and sat him on the same seat with Diliana, but back to back. Then he stepped to one side, and looking at them, said: "Eh, my Lord Duke, see the beautiful James's head. That betokens good luck. Pity that the young man has no beard! Young man, you have more hair on your teeth than on your chin, I take it.* Why do you not scrape diligently; shall I give you a receipt?"

But the Knight made no answer, only grew red for shame. Whereupon my magister left off jesting; and taking the

* Having hair on the teeth, means being a brave, fearless person, one who will stand up boldly for his own.

young man's arm, laid it upon the maiden's, in the form of a cross, then opened a vein in each, murmuring some words, while the blood-stream poured down into two silver cups which were held by his Highness, the Duke.

But, woe! my Knight sinks down in a dead faint off his side of the couch to the ground. Which, when Diliانا heard, she springs up with her arm still bleeding, and exclaims: "The Knight is dead! Oh, save the Knight!" Then the poor child wept. "Ah, what will become of me? What is this you mean to do with us?"

So the magister gave over the young Knight to the care of his Highness, who held a smelling-flask to his nose, while Dr. Joel took some of his blood and poured it into Diliانا's arm, after which he bound it up. And then, when the young Knight began to recover, she hastened, weeping, out of the apartment, saying, "Tell the Knight not to touch his arm. When there is necessity I shall press mine. Farewell! Gracious Lord Duke, and help me day and night with the sixth petition in the Lord's Prayer!" And she would not return, though the Duke called out after her, "A word,—one word!" Item, M. Joel. "Bring a shift with you that belonged to your grandmother! Nothing can be done unless you bring this with you!" She hastens on to the inn, and when the Knight recovered sufficiently to follow after her, behold there was her carriage already crossing the Oder-bridge, which so afflicted him, that the tears poured from his eyes, and he cursed the whole world in his great love-agony, particularly his Grace, the magister, and the ghost of Clara. For to these three he imputed all the grievous vexations and misfortunes he endured with regard to the fair maiden.

Yet he lived in hope that she would soon press her wounded arm, and thus establish a sympathy of thought between them. So he set spurs to his horse and rode back again to his good castle of Pansin.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF THE AWFUL AND MAJESTIC APPEARANCE OF THE
SUN-ANGEL, OCH.

At last the blessed autumn arrived, and found my Ludecke still torturing and burning, and Sidonia still practising her evil sorceries upon man and beast, of which, however, it would be tiresome here to notice all the particulars. And on the 11th day of September, Jobst and his fair daughter arrived at Old Stettin, where the Knight again tried to remonstrate with his Highness about the conjuration, but without any success, as we may easily suppose. Thereupon the Duke and the magister commenced a discipline of fastings. Item, every day they had magic baths, and this continued up to the midnight of the 22d day, when they at last resolved to begin the great work, for the sun entered *Libra* that year on the 23d day of September, at twenty minutes after 2 o'clock, A.M.

So they all three put on garments of virgin-white linen, and Dilliana drew over hers a shift which had belonged to her grandmother of blessed memory, Clara von Dewitz, for she had not omitted to bring one with her, having searched for it with great diligence. Then she said to the magister, "Much do I wish to ask the angel, wherefore it is that God gives such power to Satan upon the earth? No man hath yet answered me on this point. May I dare to ask the angel?"

Hereupon he answered, "She might fearlessly do it, he was himself curious." So they conversed, and, meantime placed caps on their heads, made likewise of virgin linen, with the Holy *Tetragrammaton** bound thereon. Then the magister taking a hazel-wand in his right hand, placed the magic circle upon his breast with the left, which circle was made of parchment, and carved all over with magic characters, and taking up his book, bade the Duke bear the *vinculum* of the heavenly bodies, that is, the signet of the spirit; item, Dilliana, the *vinculum* of the earthly creature, as her own

* I have observed before, this was the name, *Jehovah*, in the Hebrew.

pure body, the blood of the white dove, of the field-mouse, incense, and swallow's feathers. Whereupon, he lastly made the sign of the cross, and led the way to the great knights' hall, which was already illuminated with magic lights of virgin wax, according to his directions.

Now, as they all stepped out of the door in their white robes and high caps, shaped like the mitre of a bishop, there stood my Jobst in the corridor, purple with anguish and bathed in sweat—"He would go with them;" and when the magister put him back, saying, "impossible," the poor Knight began to sob, embraced his little daughter, "for who could tell whether he would ever see his only joy upon earth alive again? Ah, into what straits had the Duke brought him and his dear little daughter!"

However, the magister bade him be of good heart for that no evil could happen to his fair daughter, seeing that she had again and again assured him of her pure virgin soul; but they must lose no time now, if the Knight chose to stand outside he might do so. To this Jobst consented, but when the three others had entered the knight's hall, my magister turned round to bolt the door, on which the alarmed father shook the door violently—

"He would never consent to have it bolted; if it were, he would burst it in with a noise that would waken the whole castle. He was a father, and if any danger were in there, he could spring in and save his poor little worm, or die with her, if need be."

So the magister consented at last not to bolt the door, but clapped it to, so that the Knight could not peep through. He is not to be outwitted, however; drew off his buff doublet, took out a gimlet from his pocket, and bored a hole in the door, laid his hat upon the doublet, took his naked sword between his legs, and, resting both hands firmly on the hilt, bent down and placed his eye at the gimlet-hole, through which he could distinctly see all that passed in the room. And the three walked up to the centre of the hall, where the magic lights were burning, and the magister unloosed the circle from his breast and spread it out upon the ground, as far as it would reach, *then* he drew a figure with white chalk at each of the four

corners, like interlaced triangles, and taking the vinculum of the heavenly creature, or the signet of the sun-angel, which was written with the blood of a coal-black raven upon virgin parchment, out of the hand of the Duke, hung it upon a new dagger, which no man had ever used, and fixed the same in the circle towards the north—

“For,” said he, “the spirit will come from the north, only watch well for the little white cloud that always preceeds him, and be not alarmed at anything, for I have too often practised this conjuration to anticipate danger now.”

After all this was done, and the pan of perfume, with the vinculum of the earthly creature, had been placed in the centre, the magister spake:—“In the name of God the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen!” And stepped from the north side the first into the circle, within which he kneeled down and repeated a beautiful prayer.

And the two others responded “Amen.” Whereupon the wise Theurgist, the brave priest of the grand primitive old faith rose up, made the sign of the cross at the north, and began the conjuration of the angel with a loud voice.

They were harsh and barbarous words that he uttered, which no one understood, and they lasted a good pater-noster long; after which, the priest stopped and said—

“Gracious Prince, lay the left hand upon the vinculum of the heavenly creature:—virgin, step with thy left foot upon the signet of the spirit, in the north of the circle. After the third *pausa* he must appear.”

With these words he began the conjuration again; but, behold, as it was ended, a form appeared, not at the north but at the south, and glided on in a white, bloody shroud, until it reached the centre of the circle. At this sight the magister was transfixed with horror, and made the sign of the cross, then said in an agitated voice—

“All good spirits praise God the Lord!”

Upon which the spirit answered—

“In eternity. Amen!”

Whilst Diliaua exclaimed—

“Grandmother! grandmother! are thou indeed her spirit?”

So the spirit glided three times round the circle, with a plaintive wailing sound, then stepped before Diliana, and making the sign of the cross, said—

“Daughter, take that shift of mine from off thee, it betokens misfortune. It is No. 7, and see, I have No. 6 for my bloody shroud.”

Whereupon it pointed to the throat, where indeed, the red number 6 was plainly discernable.

Diliana spake—

“Grandmother, how did these things come to pass?”

But the spirit laid the forefinger on its mouth in silence. Whereupon she asked again—

“Grandmother, art thou happy?”

The spirit answered—

“I hope to become so, but take off that shift, the angel must soon appear; it will be Sidonia’s death shroud.”

As the spirit said these words it disappeared again towards the south, whereupon the Knight at the gimlet-hole, cried out—

“There was some one here, was it the angel?”

“No, no,” screamed Diliana, while she quickly stepped out of the circle, and drew off the shift. “No, it was my poor grandmother!”

“Silence,” cried the magister; “for God’s sake, no talking more, we have already lost ten seconds by that ghost. Now quick with the vinculum of the earthly creature! My Prince, strew the incense upon the burner; virgin, dip the swallows feathers in the blood of the white dove, and streak my two lips with them. Now all be still if you value your life. Eternity is listening to us, and the whole apartment is full of invisible spirits.”

Then he repeated the conjuration for the third time, and, behold, at the last word, a white cloud appeared at the north, that at every moment become brighter and brighter, until a red pillar of light, about an arm’s thickness, shot forth from the centre of it, and the most exquisite fragrance with soft tones of music were diffused over the whole north end of the hall; then the cloud seemed to rain down radiant flowers of hues and beauty, such as earth had never seen, after which a tremendous sound, as if a clap of thun-

der, shook not only the castle to its foundation, but seemed to shake heaven and earth itself, and the cloud, parting in twain, disclosed the sun-angel in the centre. Yet the Knight outside never heard this sound, nor did old Kruger, the Duke's boot-cleaner, who sat in the very next room reading the Bible; he merely thought that the clock had run down in the corridor, and sent his wife out to see, and this seems to me a very strange thing, but the Knight, through his gimblet-hole, saw plainly, that a chair, which they had forgotten to take out of the way of the angel at the north side, was utterly consumed by his presence, and when he had passed, lay there a heap of ashes.

And the angel in truth appeared in the form of a beautiful boy of twelve years old, and from head to foot shone with a dazzling light. A blue mantle, sown with silver stars, was flung around him, but so glittering to the eye that it seemed a portion of the milky way he had torn from heaven, as he passed along, and wrapped round his angelic form. On his feet, rosy as the first clouds of morning, were bound golden sandals, and on his yellow hair a crown; and thus surrounded by radiant flowers, odours, and the soft tones of heavenly music, he swept down in grace and glorious beauty to earth. When the Theurgist beheld this, he fell on his knees along with the others, and prayed:—

“We praise thee, we bless thee, we adore thee, O lofty spirit of God!—thou throne-angel of the Almighty!—that thou hast deigned by the word of our father Adae, by the word of our father Henoch, and by the word of our father Noah, to enter the darkness of this our second world, and appear before our eyes. Help us, blessed angel!—help us!”

And the angel said, “What will ye?”

Here the Duke took heart, and gave for answer: “Lord, an evil witch, a devil's sorceress, wickeder than anything yet known upon earth, Sidonia Bork by name—”

But the angel let him continue no further, and with a glance of terrible anger exclaimed: “Silence, thou drunken man of blood!”

Then, looking upon Dilliana, murmured softly: “Speak, thou pure and blessed maiden!”

At this the virgin took courage, and answered:—“Our

gracious Prince would know how the evil spirit of my cousin Sidonia can be overcome?"

"Seize Wolde first," replied the angel, "then the evil spirit of Sidonia will become powerless. What wouldst thou know further?"

Hereupon the modest virgin blushed, stammered, and looked down; then from awe and terror, scarcely knowing what she said, made answer:—

"Behold, thy servant would know wherefore the Almighty and All-merciful God hath, since the beginning of time, allowed so much power to Satan over his creatures, the works of his own hands?"

Then the angel spake:—"That is a grave and serious question, maiden, and the answer would be above thy comprehension; yet this much I will explain to thee—if there were no devil and no evil, many attributes of the Almighty God our Lord would have remained for ever hid from you, children of humanity, as well as from us, spirits of heaven. Therefore, from the beginning, hath God permitted such power to the devil as might show forth these his attributes to the wondering universe. First, after the fall, his *justice* was revealed, as you have seen displayed in the old covenant, and this attribute could never have been manifested unless evil and the devil had entered into the world. Now, thought the devil, when he beheld the manifestation of this terrible attribute, the whole human race must fall for ever to perdition, and the Lord God must be the first to murder the work of his own hands. But, lo! before heaven and earth, the great God manifested two new attributes; namely, mercy and love, for he fulfilled his word given to Satan in Paradise. The serpent-treader entered into the world, and oh! infinite wonder! heaven and earth, which till then had seen God but in his goodness, now beheld his love bleed from the wounds of his Son on Golgotha, and the world reconciled to him for ever, through Christ.

"Yet Satan still thinks to regain his lost dominion over the world; therefore it shall come to pass that the Lord will suffer him to become a mock and derision to all mankind, and for the first time since the world was made men will doubt his existence and disbelieve his power, and his

name will be a scorn and idle word to the very children, and the old wives by their spinning-wheels. Then will be manifested some new attribute of divinity, of which as yet thou, nor I, nor any creature, may have an opportunity to contemplate. All this has lain in the purpose of God, in order to increase the happiness of his creatures; for all the other attributes of the Almighty, such as Infinity, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, awaken only *awe* in the mind of the finite; but those attributes which he manifests in his triumph over sin and Satan, are what truly awaken *love*, and through love, above all, is the happiness of the creature advanced. When God has thus manifested all his attributes by means of sin and Satan, to the joy of his faithful servants, men and angels, for all eternity, who without sin and Satan would never have known them, then the great day of the Lord will come, when the wine of his love-spirit will inspire every creature that believes on him in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth! Further—”

But behold, at this word of the angel, a blue ray, about the thickness of an arm, came up from the south into the middle of the circle, and blended itself, trembling and glittering, with the radiant cloud and flowers. When the angel beheld this, he said:—

“Lo! I am summoned to the ruins of Nineveh. Let me depart?”

At this the Duke took heart again to speak, and began: “Lord, how is my ancient race—”

But the angel again interrupted him with,—“Silence, thou drunken man of blood!”

And when the magister repeated the form which broke the conjuration, the angel disappeared as he had come, with a terrible clap of thunder; and clouds, light, flowers, odours, and music, all passed away with him, and the hall became dark and silent as the grave.

But in a couple of seconds, just as the magister had stepped out of the circle with the virgin, who trembled in every limb, even as he did himself, my Jobst comes rushing in at the door with joyful mien, thanks God, sobs, embraces his little daughter twice, thrice—embraces her again, and at last asks:—“What said the angel?”

And they told him all—item, about the ghost of his poor mother, and what it desired. Then, for the first time, they observed that the Duke stood still within the circle with folded arms, and eyes bent upon the ground.

“My Lord Duke, will you not step out of the circle!” exclaimed the magister.

Whereupon the Duke started, sprang from the circle to the spot where they stood, and, seizing the magister by the throat, roared: “Dog of a sorcerer! this is some of thy black-art. Jobst here was right; thou hast raised no angel, but a devil!”

At this the terrified magister first tried to release himself from his Grace’s hold, then began to explain, but the Duke would listen to nothing.

“It was clear as the sun this was no angel, but a devil, who, as St. Paul says, had transformed himself into an angel of light; for, first, the hellish emissary had called him a bloodhound. Now, what blood had he ever shed, except the blood of accursed witches? and this, as a just ruler, he had done upon the express command of God himself (Exodus xxii. 18), where it is written:—‘Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.’ No one, therefore, from heaven or upon earth, could blame him for fulfilling the commands of God, yet the spirit had blamed him. *Ergo*, he was not an angel, but a devil. Next, the knave twice called me a drunkard. Here clearly he showed himself no angel, but, as the Lord Jesus named him, the ‘father of lies;’ for tell me, friends, was I drunk to-day? If I do take a sleeping draught after the fatigues of the day—tell me, what does that matter to this impudent devil? So I say with that Mecklenburgh nobleman in Dobberan:—

‘Away, away, thou devil from me,
I care not a single hair for thee;
In spite of the devil, a noble man
Should drain to the last his drinking-can.
I’ll sup with the Lord and the saints the first,
While thou, poor devil, must ever thirst.
I’ll drain the mead from the flowing bowl,
While the devil is sitting in hellish dole;
Therefore, away, thou devil, from me,
I care not a single hair for thee.’”

* This inscription is still to be seen upon a tombstone in Dobberan.

And doth not Martinus Lutherus say—

‘ Who loves not wine, women, and song,
Remains a fool his whole life long ?’

Marry, the grievous devil may wait long enough before he makes me a fool. I am too sharp for the stuff with which he humbugs you, my wise chattering magister!”

But the magister began to demonstrate how unlikely it was that Satan would give advice how to subdue himself; “For how then could his kingdom stand?” as the Lord said, Luke xi. So the Duke listened, and grew thoughtful—at last exclaimed: “Well, come, we’ll settle that over the wine-cup; and to spite the knave, we’ll keep up the carouse till morning; the night is already half spent, and I have some glorious Muscadel in the cellar.”

My Jobst, however, will not remain; and Diliانا asks, “What his Grace will do about Wolde?”

This set his Grace again upon abusing the spirit—“Ay, truly, he must have been a devil—Master Beelzebub himself, and no good angel—for had he not bid him twice to hold his tongue when he began to ask about his old illustrious race, and what should be done to preserve it from utter destruction? The magister might go to the devil himself now, with all his magic; he saw clearly through the whole business.”

So a great strife arose between them, which ended in the Duke permitting the blessed maiden to press the wound in her arm, in order to communicate, by means of the magnetic alphabet, with the Knight, who at that moment was keeping watch with his good sword in the chapel of Marienfliess. Everything, however, must be performed before the eyes of the Duke, else he would not believe it; so the young maiden, blushing for shame, pressed the wound on her arm; and after a brief space, cried out with wonder—“In truth I feel the pressure now of itself.” Whereupon, at the command of the magister, she threw up her wide sleeve (for she still wore the magister’s robe), and placed the little box with the magnet on her arm, directing the magnetic needle, with a fine stick, to the letters, thus:—

S—E—I—Z—E—W—O—L—D—E.

She then retired to a chamber, to put on her own dress, and had scarcely finished when she feels the pressure on her arm again. Whereupon she calls to his Grace and the magister, who set the magnet immediately on her arm, when, to the great surprise of his Grace, the needle turns of itself to the letters—

S—H—E—I—S—S—E—I—Z—E—D.

This sight gave my gracious Lord fresh courage: “And after all, perhaps that was an angel; for surely Sidonia would have protected her maid, if her evil spirit had not become powerless, as the spirit had foretold. And now they would soon have the arch-sorceress herself. He would send a horseman instantly to Christian Ludecke, who was burning witches at Colbatz, to hasten, without delay, to Marienfliess.”

At last he permits Jobst, since he will not drink, to take his leave; “yet he and his fair daughter must first promise, by their honour, not to breathe a word of the magic conjuration, since the ignorant and stupid people would only make a mock of such matters; and why cast pearls before swine, or holy mysteries to dogs?” And truly they kept the secret of his Grace, so that not a word was known thereof until Duke Bogislaff the Fourteenth communicated the same to me, precisely as he had the facts from his brother, and gave me permission to publish them in my “History of Sidonia.”

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW OLD WOLDE IS SEIZED, CONFRONTED WITH SIDONIA, AND
FINALLY BURNED BEFORE HER WINDOW.

MEANWHILE the young knight, George Putkammer, had ridden over to Marienfliess on the appointed day, to sheriff Eggart Sparling's. He mentioned nothing of the great magic work, as the Duke had forbidden him to do so, but

merely said that he had orders from the Prince to seize Sidonia that night.

At this, my sheriff shuddered: "The young Knight should reflect on what he was about; young people were often fool-hardy and confident, to their utter ruin. What did he want from him? If he got half the world for it, he would not touch even the clothes of the devil's hag. He had tried it once, and that would do him for his life."

But the Knight answered: "He had pledged his word to the Duke, and must hold by it. His worship must just give him a couple of stout fellows to help him."

Ille.—"Did he really think that in the whole bailiwick a fellow could be got to go with him, when it was known he was going to seize the sorceress—the devil's night-bird? Ha! ha! ha!"

Hic.—"Then he would do it alone. His worship must just give him some cords, and show him a prison where he could put the vile witch."

Ille.—"Cords he should have, as many as he wished, but on no account must the hag be brought to the court-house. He knew her well, and would take care to have nothing to do with her."

Hic.—"At least, then, his worship must lend him a horse, and he would bind the dragon thereon with stout cords, and carry her away to his good castle of Pansin, where there was a deep dungeon, in which he could lay her, until he knew the Duke's pleasure."

Ille.—"The horse he might have, and choose one himself from the stall, and if it pleased him, bind the witch on its back there in the church-yard, under the linden-trees; but to the court-house the witch must not come—certainly not—or she would suspect him of having a hand in her capture. Yet let the Knight think again, and give up this dangerous business, or surely they had beheld each other for the last time."

But the Knight only waited until the clock pointed to ten; then taking a lantern, he goes and chooses out a stout white mare (for such, they say, are antipathetical to witches), ties her to a linden in the church-yard, enters the church, lights the altar candles, and sits there, reading in the large

bible; until about the hour that the conjuration was taking place at Old Stettin, when a strange feeling of uneasiness came over him, and he rose up and walked to and fro in the church in great agitation. Suddenly he felt a pressure on his wounded arm, and turning up the sleeve of his doublet, pressed in return, after which, he laid the magnet upon it, and, to his surprise, read that he was to seize Wolde, not Sidonia. Instantly he took up the lantern and the cords, put his good sword under his arm, and ascended the steps up to the nun's gallery, and from that, entered the convent corridor, as the door between always lay open; but stumbling, by chance, into Anna Apenborg's cell, she led him down a flight of stairs to the ground floor, and close to the refectory, where she pointed to a little chamber adjoining, whispering, "There is where the old cat snores;" then creeps behind a barrel, to watch, while the Knight, holding the light before him, stepped at once into the cell, crying, "Stand up, old night-bird, and get on thy rags, thine hour hath come."

A scream of horror was the answer from the hag, and she clapped violently at the refectory wall, calling out: "Help me! help! help! a fellow has seized me, lady-prioress!" But the Knight was resolved to make quick work of it; and hearing a stir already in Sidonia's apartment, threw himself upon the hag, and bound her hands tight with the cords, while she screamed, and struggled, and yelled piteously for the lady-prioress; then dragging her up, he exclaimed, "Since thou didst not heed me, now thou shalt come off naked as thou art; better the devil should not have a rag to catch hold of. Come!"

But a fearful looking form just then rushed into the room—it was Sidonia, just as she had risen from bed, bearing a lamp in her hand, with her white hair flowing wildly about her face and shoulders, and her red glowing eyes fixed menacingly upon the Knight. She had just begun a terrific curse, when the young man, seeing the cat in his red hose following, lifted his sword and with one blow cut him clean in two, but started back, for the first time, in terror, when *he beheld* one half, on its two legs, run quickly under *Wolde's* bed, and the other half, on the two other legs,

make off for the refectory, through the door which had been left open. Even Sidonia recoiled at the sight; but soon, with increased ferocity, sprang at the Knight, screaming and clenching her hands. But he cried out, "Hold! or I will cleave thee in twain, even as thy cat." And in truth she stopped stone-still, but soon began to spit and murmur. Whereupon he cried out again, "Ay, spit and mumble; but know that my good friend, of whom I told thee, stands without, and if but a finger of mine aches, now or in future, he hath sworn thy death."

Then swinging Wolde's clothes, which lay on the bed, over her shoulder with the point of his sword, he exclaimed to Sidonia:—"Away, away, or the like will be done to thee!"

Whereupon, amidst the howling of the hag, and the horrible curses and maledictions of Sidonia, he re-crossed the gallery and the church, the lame she-devil still howling before him, till they entered the churchyard; after which my brave Knight bound her feet upon the white mare, and rode away with her to his good castle of Pansin.

I had forgotten to notice before, that the pastor was not buried within the church, as his widow first intended, but was laid outside in the blessed earth, because she feared that the man-wolf might get at him again within the church-vault and tear him.

Summa.—That same evening the witch-commissioner, Christian Ludecke, arrived with his secretary at Marienfliess, according to the mandate of the Prince; and behind them come two wagons, on one of which sits the executioner with his assistants, the red flag floating above him, and the second is laden with the instruments of torture and the rack; for those belonging to the court-house of Marienfliess were not considered powerful enough. And, as usual, they enter the town chanting a sacred hymn, at which sound every one shudders, but my sheriff is particularly horror-struck; and, rushing out to meet them at the courthouse, cried out—

"What the devil! is the bloodhound back again? Did he think that witches grew up in the town like cabbages?" but held his peace instantly, when he heard that all was done by command of the Prince.

So the lame hag was brought back again from Pansin that night, and the *articuli indictionales* were drawn up against her, in which it was not forgotten that years before, she had sat in the cellar of the poor dairy-woman's mother, and there bewitched the cocks and hens, as many old people still living could testify; and the bailiff's wife is by no means slack either in helping her to the same death as the poor dairy-mother. While the whole town and adjacent country rang with these proceedings, Sidonia's disquietude became evident. Every day she sent Anna Apenborg up to the court-house, and there the said Anna and the serving-maid of the scribe were seen with their heads together in every corner conversing, and each day brought less comfort to the terrible witch of Marienfiess. Therefore, about this time, she changed her demeanour to the nuns, and in place of her usual fierce and cruel bearing, she now became quite mild, threw up her eyes, went regularly to church every Sunday, and sighed deeply during the sermon. Day and night she was singing spiritual songs, and sent to Stargard to purchase prayer-books, all to make the world think that she had grown truly religious. Item, she sent her new maid, Anna Dorings by name, to Stargard, to purchase mercury for her from the apothecary; and when the maid handed the same to her, she heard her murmur as if to herself, while she locked up the poison in her press:—

“So now, at least, they can do nothing worse with me than behead me!”

Then she went herself one day to Stargard, and visited a celebrated advocate, called Elias Paul. “The world was now so hard-hearted, and the devil so active, that she feared her turn might come next to be tried for a witch, just for the sympathy she showed for the poor creatures. Alas! how Satan blinded the reason of men; for when were such cruelties ever heard of as were practised now on poor helpless women? (Weeping.) And would not my Elias defend her from this ferocious blood-hound, Christian Ludecke, who had come again to Marienfiess, and boasted loudly that, when he had made an end of her old maid, Wolde, he would seize her next; and even sworn that, to make a terrible *example* of her, her nose and ears should be torn off with

red-hot pincers ere she was tied to the stake. And what would my Elias do for her? She had a few dozen gold crowns which her sister Dorothea had left her by will, and willingly she would give them, if he turned the base malice of her enemies to shame. Ah, he might take pity on her; for she was a good and holy virgin, and as innocent of all they charged her with as the child in the cradle!" (Weeps and sobs again.)

So the cunning witch had struck the right nail on the head, for my Elias was a great lover of coins; and though he had a few silver and many copper, yet not a single gold one did he possess. Therefore he became thoughtful after her speech, and walked up and down the room for a quarter of an hour, after which he stood still, and answered:—

"Lady, you know as well as I do that your name is notorious throughout the whole land, and little hope can I give you if you are brought to trial. However, I will do what I can to delay the time as much as possible; perchance from your great age, and the bitter heart-remorse you must, no doubt, suffer, that you may end your miserable life before they can lay violent hands on you. Pray to the Lord God, therefore, day by day, for your speedy death: I will, likewise, pray for you. Meanwhile, if any evil befall you, I will write petitions in your favour to all the neighbouring princes, to the resident nobles, and to the Duke himself in Stettin, for your race is one of the most illustrious in all Pomerania. And respecting the gold crowns which you promise, send them speedily; for remember, from the moment they arrest you, your *inventorium* is sealed."

This my hag promised, and took her leave; but, woe! the first news she heard upon her return home was, that her maid, by a decree of the council at Stettin, had that day been put to the torture; and having on the rack confessed that she (Sidonia) was the true arch-sorceress, they were to be confronted with each other on the morrow. This news Anna Apenborg told her before she had well descended from the coach—item, many of the other nuns confirmed the rumour; so that the unfortunate wretch at last resolved, in despair, to put an end to herself. However, she had little inclination to taste the mercury, I think.

So in the twilight she creeps out behind the brew-house, which stood three or four feet from the convent wall, so that no one in the convent could see what she was about, draws a ladder after her, sets it against the wall, and mounts, intending to spring down into the river below and drown herself.

Now it happened that in the oak-wood, at the opposite side of the stream, my Ludecke and the sheriff were walking up and down, and the sheriff's teeth were chattering in his head from pure fright; for a courier from Stettin had arrived that very evening with an order from his Grace, commanding him, under pain of severe punishment and princely disfavour, to be present, along with Jobst Bork, on the following morning, when Sidonia and Wolde were confronted. Their eyes were suddenly attracted to a head rising above the opposite wall, then long white hair fluttered wildly in the evening breeze, and afterwards a thin, black form appeared, until the entire figure stood upon the top of the wall, and extended its arms as a young stork its wings, when it essays to leave the nest, while the eyes were fixed on the water below. Instantly they both recognised Sidonia, and saw what her purpose was.

"Let her, let her," whispered the sheriff to the other; "if she is dead, if she is dead, we shall all rest in peace!"

But the other seized a stone, and flung it with all his might at the wall, crying out:—"Wait, thou shameless witch; doth thy conscience move thee so?"

Whereupon the black figure dropped down again behind the wall as quickly as possible. And my Ludecke, being loath to lose the fat morsel he had ready for the flames, resolved to place four guards over her in the refectory; but though the whole town was searched—item, menaced that the executioner should scourge them man by man, yet no one will undertake the dangerous office. At last four fellows are found, who promise, for a tun of beer at the very least, to hold watch in the convent square, so that the witch cannot get away out of the building, with which my bloodhound is obliged to be content.

Next morning, at nine of the clock, Sidonia was cited to appear in court, but as she did not come and mocked the

messenger who was sent for her, Ludecke commanded the executioner to go himself, and if she would not come by fair means, to drag her by force. The fellow hesitated, however—

“It was a dangerous business; but if his worship was very anxious, why, for a good horse from the ducal stables, he might dare it, since his own nag had fallen lame.”

So this being promised, he departed, and, in a short time, they beheld the carl in his red mantle dragging Sidonia up to the court-house; and, methinks, many within shuddered at the sight; for there were present sitting round the green table—Christian Ludecke, Eggat Sparling, Jobst Bork, and the scribe, Christopher Kahn.

But when the executioner threw open the door, and bade the witch take off her shoes and enter backwards, she refused and scolded—

“What? her bitterest enemies were to be her judges. The thick ploughman from Saatzig, who had stolen her rents from the farm-houses at Zachow; item, the arch-cheat Sparling, who robbed his Prince every day—such rabble—burgher carls—secretary fellows, and the like—no; she would never enter. She was the lady of castles and lands, besides her advocate was not here, and she had engaged one at Stargard;” finally she pushed the door to with her foot.

“Master,” cried the blood-hound within, “seize the witch in the name of the Prince!”

Whereupon the door was again thrown open, and my hag, sobbing loudly, was forced into the court in her socks, and backwards.*

“And what did they want with her,” she asked, still sobbing.

Whereupon the commissioner made a sign to the executioner, who instantly admitted old Wolde Albrecht by the same door. She entered bare-foot, and in the black shift worn upon the rack, upon which the red blood lay in deep fresh stains. When Sidonia beheld this she shuddered.

* Because the judges on witch-trials feared the evil influence of the glances of the accused.

length he calls his little daughter Diliانا from the spinning wheel where she sat.

"Ah, the Prince had set his life in great peril, but more than the Prince himself did she, his little daughter, plague him by showing herself so cold to the brave young Knight. She ought to leave off this prudery, else he feared by the next time the sun was in the propitious position, that his Highness would send for her again to question the devil—there was nothing such a fanatic would not do; but if she would only press her arm now, and bid the young Knight come. Where could she meet with a braver husband?"

At this the young maiden blushed up to her very eyes, and asked earnestly—

"Father, think you the good Knight stays away because I have not summoned him?"

Ille.—"Of course, my child. Thou forbade him to approach thee until summoned; and now where could be a greater proof of his love than in having obeyed thee?"

Hæc.—"Ah, me, I have wondered so, father, why he never sought me. I never meant that, you surely misunderstood me. But, father, if you wish—shall I summon him by the magnetic sign?"

Ille.—Nods his head, laughing.

Whereupon Diliانا, blushing yet more, pressed her arm, and feeling a pressure in return almost immediately, pushed up her sleeve, set the magic box thereon, and, with her golden breast-pin, directed the magnetic needle to the letters—

C—O—M—E—D—E—A—R—E—S—T.

Whilst my Jobst looked over her shoulder, so that his long gray beard fell upon her neck, and when he read the letters he embraced and kissed her, telling her that a better kisser would soon come and save him the trouble—meaning the Knight, and truly scarce half an hour had passed, when the cloud of dust could be seen through the trees, which was raised as he rode along, and, panting and agitated, he sprang into the room, exclaiming to my Jobst—"Where is Diliانا?" But she sits mute in the corner, red as a rose, and looks down upon the ground.

So my Jobst laughed, and pointed to the blushing rose in the corner, whereupon the young Knight, George, in a moment, is by her side, and had her hand in his, and asks—

“If his loved Rachael will not end his weary years of serving now, and be his for evermore?”

“Yes,” she murmured, through her soft tears, “I will be yours now for evermore;” and she extended her two arms towards him.

Marry, how soon my young Knight took the trouble off the old father; so that Jobst danced for joy at the sight, and clapped his hands, and swore that such a wedding should be held at Saatzig, that people would talk about it for fifty years.

But, alas! the wedding must wait for a year and a day! for, in two days the young Knight is laid upon a sick bed, and brought so low that at one time his life was despaired of. However, he comforted himself by pressing his wounded arm three times a day, and thus corresponding with his betrothed by means of the magnet. So they told their grief and their love to each other daily in these few words. And many think that his sickness was a devil’s work of Sidonia, or of old Wolde’s planning; but he himself rather judged it arose from the wild ride to his young bride on the morning she bade him come. This matter, therefore, I leave undecided.

Yet no one can surely fathom all the cunning wiles of Satan; for though many said Sidonia’s power is now broken by Wolde’s death, and indeed the poor sheriff was the only one who still played the hare, and kept the roaring ox safe up in the stall—still, so strange a thing happened at this time to the Knight, Ewald von Mellenthin, that the criminal court thought proper to take cognizance of the matter, and so we find it noted down in the records of the trial. For, mark! This same Knight, being summoned to give evidence, deposed to Sidonia having in his presence, flung a hatchet at his dear bride, Ambrosia von Guntersberg, who had been now a long while his well-beloved spouse, which hatchet had wounded her in the foot. Then turning to the hag, he exclaimed, wrathfully—

"Ha! thou devil's witch, hast thou found thy recompense at last?"

Whereupon Sidonia made a face at him after her fashion, and menaced him with the vengeance of her friends.

But what friend had she but Satan, who avenged her on this wise. For, as some days after, the knight Ewald was driving with his cousin Detloff, between Schlotenitz and Schellin, such an awful roaring, and raging, and storming was heard in the air over their heads, that the two foremost horses took fright, broke their traces, threw the coachman, who was nearly killed, and dashed off across the field through thick and thin, and never stopped till they reached Stargard, trembling, panting, and exhausted, about evening time.

The Knight laid all this evidence before the criminal commission, and my hare grew so frightened thereupon, that next day, while listening to the depositions of more witnesses, seeing a shadow hop along his paper, he started up in horror, screaming, "There are the toad-shadows again! O God, keep me! There are the toad-shadows again!" But the special commissioner who had also observed the shadow, and got up to look out at the window, now called out, laughing heartily: "Marry, good Sparling, the shadow belongs to one of your worship's brothers—a poor little sparrow, who is hopping there on the house-top. Go out and see, if you don't believe me." Whereupon the whole court burst out into a loud fit of laughter, to the great annoyance of my hare.

Whilst Ludecke is drawing up his *articulus inquisitionalis*, Sidonia's advocate, Dr. Elias Pauli, was not idle. And first he stirred up the whole race of the Borks in her favour, letting it come to the Duke's ears through his grand chamberlain, Matzke Bork, that if Sidonia were treated with gentleness, and thereby brought to make confession, assuredly there was great hope that for this grace and indulgence she would untie the magic knots of the girdle wherewith she had bewitched the whole princely race, and laid the spell of barrenness upon them. But if extreme measures were resorted to, never would she do this for his Highness.

So the Duke was half moved to consent, and bade his

superintendent Mag. Reutzius, come to him, and he should instantly repair to Marienfliess, visit the sorceress in her apartment, where she was *bis dato*, guarded a close prisoner. Let him read out the seventy-four articles of the indictment to her himself, admonish her to confess, and in his (the Duke's) name, offer her pardon if she would untie the knots of the girdle. Did she refuse, however, let her be brought the following Sunday to the convent-chapel, there, in the presence of the whole congregation, before the altar he was again to admonish her. If she still persisted in her lies and wickedness, then let him summon the executioner to strip her of her cloister habit before the eyes of all the people. When he had further pronounced her degradation from all her conventual dignities, she was to be put in fetters and carried to the witches' tower at Saatzig.

My worthy father-in-law offered many objections against this public degradation, but his Highness was resolved, and would listen to no reasons, his wrath was so great against the hag.

Now it may be easily conjectured what crowds of people gathered in the chapel when the blessed Sabbath-bell rang, and the news ran from mouth to mouth, that the witch was to be denounced and degraded that day before the altar. Never had so many folk been seen within the walls. And when the church was so full that not a soul more could squeeze in at the doors, the people broke in the windows, and setting ladders against them, clambered through, and swung themselves right and left on the balustrades, and above and below, and on all sides, there was not a spot without a human face. Yea, four youngers crowded under the baldaquin of the pulpit, and another carl got on the altar behind the crucifix, and would have knocked it down, but my worthy father-in-law, seeing it shake, caught hold of the carle by the tail of his coat, and dragged him forth. Item, the whole criminal commission is present; item, all the nuns in their gallery, with the exception of the subprioress, Dorothea Stettin, who, along with two other women, had devoted themselves to a fearful act of vengeance (which I would hardly have believed of them), but it will be related presently.

As to Sidonia, she had been brought in already, and placed on the penitential stool before the altar, after which the organ struck up that terrible hymn,

"Eternity, thou thunder word!"

Yet, as it happened, that the congregation had not got this hymn in their Psalm-books, seeing that it was quite a new one (which circumstance had been overlooked in the general agitation) they were obliged to sing that other, beginning:

"Now the awful hour has come."

Then the reverend priest, M. Reutzius, advanced to the altar, having first chanted the litany, and there to obey the Duke's behests, as nearly as possible, opened his sermon with some verses from the afore-mentioned hymn, which I shall set down here for the sake of the curious reader:—

"Eternity, thou thunder word!
Piercing the soul like sharpest sword,
Beginning without ending!
Eternity! Time without Time,
I know not in my grief and crime
Whereto my soul is tending.
The fainting heart recoils in fear
To see thy shadow drawing near.

"In all the world there is no grief
To which Time brings some relief,
Though sorrow wildest rages;
But thou, Eternity, can bring
No balm to lessen hell's fierce sting,
Through never-ending ages.
For even Christ himself hath said,
"There's no repentance for the dead."

"So long as God in Heaven reigns,
So long shall last the sinner's pains,
In hell's fierce tortures lying.
Eternal fires will plague the soul,
Thirst, hunger, horror, fear, and dole,
The soul itself undying.
For hell's dark shades will never flee,
Till God himself hath ceased to be!"

After which, he read out the words of his text to the criminal, telling her how his Serene Highness had selected *the same* himself out of paternal clemency and in all upright-

ness. Then he explained it, admonishing her yet once more to save her poor soul and not plunge it into eternal perdition. After this, he kneeled down along with the whole congregation, and prayed to the Holy Spirit for her conversion, so that every one in the church wept, and trembled, and sobbed. Then he rose up again and spake: "I ask you, for the last time, Sidonia von Bork, do you confess yourself guilty or not?"

And while every one held their breath suspended, the terrible sorceress rose up and spake out with bold defiance,

"I am innocent. Curse upon the blood-thirsty Prince, who has brought me to this shame; my blood be upon him and upon his race!"

"No!" cried the priest from the altar; "he hath saved his soul; thy blood be upon thyself, and thy perdition upon thine own head!"

Then he lifted his right hand as a signal to the executioner, whereupon Master Worger stepped forward in his red mantle with six assistants. And first he draws forth a pair of scissors from beneath his cloak, and cut off her nun's veil (for by command of the criminal judge, she had only a simple veil on to-day), and he and his assistants trampled it beneath their feet. Then he cuts a slit in her black robe, just beneath the chin, and tore it down from head to foot, as a draper tears linen, and at this sight, and the harsh sound in the silence of the church, many amongst the nuns fainted. When all this had been done, and Sidonia now stood there in her white under-garment, Master Worger, by command of the court, put fetters on her, and rivetted them tightly. So that at the terrible sound of the hammering and clanking, and the thundering reverberation through the vaulted church, so great a horror and fear fell upon every one present, that all the nuns who had not fainted rushed out of the gallery; item, a crowd of people from the nave, and even the priest holding his hands before his eyes, hastened after them.

She was soon lifted up by the executioner and his assistant, and thrown into the cart over which the red flag waved; then driven off without delay to Saatzig, a great crowd of people trotting along with her. And even

in Saatzig the whole town ran together when the cart with the criminal was seen emerging from the wood, and the executioner blew his trumpet to give notice to the warder on the tower of their approach, as had been agreed upon.

Amongst the crowd, however, my Jobst is not to be seen; yet when the cart stops, the beautiful form of Dilliana is seen pressing forward. She is dressed in a deep mourning mantle, and bears a golden beaker of wine in her hand—weeps, and says mildly:—

“Here, dear cousin, drink! You shall have everything as good as I can make it for you, and eat what I and my father eat. Ah! cousin, cousin, wherefore did you not make full confession?”

Herewith she reached out the beaker to the cart, but the evil witch screamed out:—

“Confess! What should I confess, you fool? Away with your stuff; I will not be fed by your charity!”

Whereupon she dashed aside the beaker so fiercely that it fell to the ground, and the wine splashed all over the young maiden’s robe. Then, clenching her withered hand, she shook it at the window:—

“Hal the thick ploughman. Where hath the devil hid him? the thief that stole my rents from Zachow! This is my reward for having cured him! But wait, I will make him repent it yet,” &c.

And she would have gone on much longer with her curses, but the executioner gave her another blow with his fist which made her hold her tongue. Then he and his fellows lifted her from the cart, and as she was unable to walk from shame, and despair, and wrath, they carried her up the winding stairs to the witches’ tower; and she glowered into the little chamber which she had occupied fifty years before, at the time she murdered poor Clara von Dwitz, for they had to pass by it to reach the witches’ tower, which lay two flights of stairs higher up.

And when Master Worgar laid her down in the damp dark hole, and shook out some straw for her to lie on, the knave grinned and said:—“What would she do now for company? The devil would scarcely come; still a companion would be pleasant.”

The witch, however, made no answer, only looked down upon the ground, muttering to herself. Whereupon the knave laughed again and cried: "Eh, wait, I have got a companion for you!"

And opening a sack he had brought with him, took out a blackened human head, and then two long, black, half-burned bones; placed the the bones crosswise on the ground, and set the head a-top of them, then said: "So, now you have right merry company. That is Wolde's head, as you may perceive; and now ye may conjure the devil together as ye were wont." Then, grinning maliciously, he went out, locking the prison door upon the unfortunate wretch and the death's-head.

Meanwhile, my Jobst and his fair daughter are plunged in great perplexity and despair at the Duke's cruel order to have Sidonia sent to their castle of Saatzig. Therefore, the indignant Knight sat down and wrote an earnest remonstrance to his Highness the Duke, and prayed his Grace, therefore, to remove this millstone from his neck, or he would resign the post of Governor of Saatzig, and withdraw to his own good castle of Pausin. This letter he despatched by a running courier to Old Stettin, and it produced a good effect upon the Duke; for, in three days, an order arrived for Sidonia's removal to Oderburg; and the crowds gathered round the cart, from all parts, to see her as she passed along—as thick as if it had been the time of the annual fair.

God be thanked, I have now got her as far as the Odenburg! For as concerning her long imprisonment there, her frequent examinations, and, finally, the question by torture, what need for me to relate them here, seeing that your Highness and your illustrious brothers were present during all behind the green screen? I, too, Doctor Theodore Plonnies, assisted at the trial as high-sheriff, Anton Petersdorf was *protonotarius* to the criminal court, and Johann Caude, the *notarius*, conducted the *protocollum*. Besides, when I look back and think of her shrieks, and how the dry, withered limbs writhed and cracked upon the wheel, till the black blood poured forth from her nails and teeth, my head swims and my sight leaves my eyes—therefore, away

with it! This only will I notice, that her advocate, Doctor Elias Pauli, preserved her in truth for a year and a day from the rack and a bitter death, by his keen and cunning devices, thinking that she would make away with herself some way or other, by mercury or else, to escape the stake. But no such thing: she was as afraid of death as a cat of hot broth; so at last he had to suffer justice to take its course. Whereupon this Satan's hag, on the 28th July, 1620, at four o'clock in the afternoon, pursuant to a decree of the electoral-court of judges of Magdeburg in Saxony, was brought into the great-hall at Oderburg, and there stretched upon the rack, as I have above mentioned, to force her to a confession upon seventeen *articulos inquisitionales*, many of which I have noticed here and there through the preceding chapters.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF THE EXECUTION OF SIDONIA AND THE WEDDING OF

DILIANA.

AFTER the torture, the poor malicious old wretch became so weak that she thought herself like to die, and therefore bade my worthy godfather, Doctor Cramer, to be brought to her, that she might make full confession at last. And her repentance, in truth, seemed earnest and real now; for after the communion she bade them bring her her coffin—then sat up, and looking at it for a long while in silence, at last said:—

“I shall soon rest there in peace; meantime, carry it out again till I am dead.”

But such a hunger for the blessed sacrament was caused by her death fears, and not by holy repentance; for as she did not die, but rather after some days grew strong again (probably because the Lord God chose to spare her yet longer, for a more fearful and terrible warning to all sinners), she returned, “like a sow, to her wallowing in the mire.” And more particularly did she spit forth her poisonous curses upon the whole princely race, when the court-painter, Mat-

thias Eller, arrived at the prison with an order from his Highness, to paint her portrait, now in her hideous old age, behind that which he had seen at Wolgast, representing her in the prime of youthful beauty. Long did she weep and groan when she looked upon the portrait of what she had been sixty years before; then clenched her fists, and cursed to all eternity the princely race which had first brought her to public dishonour—she so young and innocent—and not content with that, now thirsted to see her noble blood flow from the gallows.

“Ah, that was indeed the portrait of her youth! for her princely bridegroom had got it painted secretly, because of his haughty arrogant mother, by a painter in Wolgast; but she had revenged herself on the proud old woman at last. The golden chain was her own, but the gold hair-band and the sable collar had been a present from her young bridegroom. And now, what was left of all her pomp and magnificence! See what these accursed princes had brought her to with their envy, arrogance, and savage vengeance—she that was the richest lady in the land was now the poorest beggar, and had not wherewithal even to purchase a death-shift.”

Meanwhile the report spread throughout all Pomerania land that Sidonia was dead, and had been privately buried. The cause was this,—when the executioner and his fellows carried out her coffin after she had seen it, they told the eager and curious rabble, who gathered round and had been roaring out for her death, that she was dead already and lay within, and so they would lose the fun of seeing her buried; and this they said in jest, to disappoint the filthy and savage mob. So the news spread through the land and reached Saatzig, where it was confirmed by an honourable knight from Old Stettin, who answered them on oath that he had seen her coffin carried out with his own eyes. So my Jobst and his fair daughter are glad, and thank God that one of their noble race had been spared the disgrace of falling by the hands of the hangman; the young Diliانا, in especial, rejoices, and when her lover arrived from Pansin in the afternoon (for he was grown well and strong again), she threw herself into his bosom, rapturously exclaiming:—

"Dearest George, our poor cousin is dead; now may the wedding be—now may the banns be published!"

However, the news soon came how the mistake had happened, and that Sidonia was still alive. But as the banns had been already published and the wedding fixed for the 18th of July, Diliaua at length consented to abide by the arrangement, particularly as they heard also that the execution would be delayed for some time, in consequence of the Elector of Saxony having sent in his protest against it to the Ducal Court of Stettin. Indeed so many powerful princes protested against this public disgrace, by reason of Sidonia's high rank, that many thought she would be allowed to go away perfectly free.

Summa.—Already, by the evening of the 17th, the noble guests had gathered at Saatzig, and of the Borks, almost the whole illustrious race is present; among whom were particularly noticeable the Honourable Aulic Councillors, and Councillors of Administration, Just, Andreas, and Henning. Item, all the Putkammers, among whom came the old burgomaster Wolff, with his sons, Benedictus, Asso, Gerson, Matthias Wolfgang, &c. So that by midnight the castle rang with merriment and revelry; and old Jobst Bork was so beside himself with joy, that he flung the empty flasks, as he drained them, up at the monks' heads which were carved round the capitals of the pillars in the great knights' hall, crying out, "That is for thee, monk!"

But the festive night hath a sad morning, without talking of all the drinkers who snored till mid-day. However, all were ready at last to go to the bridal, only waiting for Matzke Bork, the princely chamberlain, who had promised, if possible, to be present at the marriage, along with His Serene Highness himself, Duke Francis. So they watched from the windows, and they watched from the towers, but never a one of them is to be seen; and the guests impatiently pace up and down the great hall, which is all wreathed and decorated with flowers and banners. But the young bridegroom is the most impatient of all. He paced up and down the hall, arm-in-arm, with his betrothed, when at last a carriage was heard approaching, and every eye was turned to the window, but Matzke Bork sits in it

alone. He enters disturbed and mournful, and when the knight of Saatzig asks him where he has left his Highness the Duke, he answers:—

“The Duke will drink blood in place of wine to-day! Listen, Good cousins, to what the Duke hath resolved concerning our kinswoman Sidonia. Her sentence hath been pronounced, and this very day will be carried into effect: first, her nose and ears are to be torn up with red hot irons, at three different quarters of the town, by the public hangman, and afterwards she is to be burned alive at a slow fire.”

When he ended, all the Borks present screamed with horror, and gathered round him: “And was it not possible yet to change this sentence?”

But Matzke answered: “He had tried all entreaties, but in vain; even three times he had cast himself on his knees before his Highness, yet could obtain no mitigation; for his Grace was incensed against the witch, because of her arrogant defiance, and her stubborn refusal to remove the spell from the princely race, and sent orders to the executioner to build the pile by eight of the clock on the following morning, and burn her alive thereon.”

When he ceased speaking, the uproar in the hall rose to the highest. Some of Sidonia’s kin, amongst whom was Jobst, swore the devil’s hag deserved it all; and how could her death bring dishonour upon them? But some thought evil of the insult offered to their race, and cursed his Highness, and would spring to their saddles and ride to Stettin on the instant.

Matzke, however, lifted his voice, and bade them have reason. “They must endure what could not be altered. Jobst was right; was the proud oak the worse because a rotten branch was lopped off? Were they to come before his Highness with such mien and gesture, why he would straight order them all to be clapped into prison, and then, indeed, would disgrace rest on their illustrious name. No, no; for God’s sake let them not rest here. His Grace was too full of wrath now to listen even to his preachers, the ministers of God. How, then, would he hear them? Let them rather rest in peace, and forget the fate of their evil cousin in the festivities of the bridal.”

"Ay, good cousins and guests," quoth the bridegroom, "let us to the bridal, and the word of God will calm us, and bring us upon other thoughts. But where is my beloved Diliانا?"

They sought her in the hall—in vain! They ran all through the castle—in vain! Diliانا is away, and no one knows whither she has gone.

But the maiden hath a brave spirit, and hath wrapped a black mantle belonging to her mourning robes over her bridal dress, and drawn the hood over her myrtle wreath; then taking the shift of her grandmother, Clara, in her hand, which she had kept ready by her for such a case, she descended to the stables, where there were only two grooms to be seen, all the others having joined the crowd round the church, to catch a sight of the bridal procession, had the best palfrey saddled, took one groom with her, pressed some money into the hand of the other, and bade him not tell, for three hours, that she had gone to Old Stettin. Then rode away, striking, however, into a by-path, to deceive the guests, in case they should attempt to follow her. And her journey ended all safely; for in four hours she was in Old Stettin, without having been pursued. And reaching the ducal residence, she alighted, hastened up the stairs, bowed proudly to the princely official, without uttering a word, and proceeded straight to the apartment of the Duke. There threw off her travelling hood and mantle, and knocked bravely at the door.

"Enter!" exclaimed the voice of his Highness. Upon which the beautiful maiden in her bridal robes, and the myrtle wreath on her hair, stepped in. At which sight, his Grace, who was reclining on a couch, started up, took her hand smiling, and asked—"For the love of heaven, what brought her hither upon her festal-day?"

So she began: "This was no festal-day, but a day of shame to her and her whole race, because of the horrible and incredible tidings brought to them by Matzke Bork, respecting their old kinswoman, Sidonia; therefore she had left bridegroom, bridal, and festival, and ridden away alone, to see if she could not turn away such a disgrace from her noble race, and such horrible torture from her poor old

kinswoman. Had she not freely periled her life for his Grace? If they had not succeeded, at least it was no fault of hers. Let him recall the terrible decree, and if her cousin deserved death, as she doubted not, command her to be beheaded, as had at first been agreed upon. This, at least, was a more honourable and less painful death. His Grace must grant her prayer, for she would not move from the spot until he did so."

But his Grace is inexorable, and recapitulates all the sins of the demon hag; "how she had defied him, and made a mock of the holy sacrament; and wherefore did he bear the sword from God, if it were not as a just Prince, to set her forth a terrible warning and example to all; for witchcraft was increasing day by day in the land, and witches were almost as plenty as flies."

His Grace then paced up and down a long while in silence, at last spake—

"Now, for thy sake, the first decree shall hold good, although never was one so unworthy of my favour as this hag."

Whereat the young virgin was so moved with gratitude, that she fell down on her knees before his Grace, and bedewed his hand with her tears.

Just then some one knocked, and the jailor entered—

"The witch had taken another fit of conversion, and prayed for a priest. Item, for a fresh shift, for she had not changed her linen for four weeks, and no one would give her a fresh shift."

When Diliانا heard this, she wondered much over the dark providence of God, and said—"Wait, I will give thee a shift for her;" stepped out into the gallery and took Clara's, No. 7, which she had brought with her out of her travelling mantle, and, in truth, this was the very shift in which the murderess was carried to her death.

Summa.—The jailor hath scarcely got the said shift under his arm, when the clatter of footsteps is heard upon the stairs, and then another knock at the Duke's apartment, and this was my knight George Putkammer, who rushed in, arrayed in his wedding finery, but all covered over with dust, since he had given himself time to fling a cloak

over his dress. He clasped his young bride to his heart, and half scolded her for leaving him privately before the bridal. But when he heard of her noble courage, and what she had accomplished, he was glad again, and kissed the hand of his Grace, and he must now grant them one favour more, and return with them to the wedding. The distance was only five miles, and he had the finest Malmsey that ever was drunk to present to his Highness."

At this hearing, his Grace exclaimed—

"Eh, George, where have you got the Malmsey? Ha! younker, hast thou a cup of Malmsey, I will go with thee right heartily to Saatzig!"

And his Grace wanted to order carriages instantly to carry them all off, that so they might arrive that same evening at the castle, but Diliana objected—

"No, she would stand by her word, and never hold bridal in Saatzig until her poor cousin lay at rest in her grave. This night she would remain in the town, and not leave it until she had seen the last of her poor cousin."

A long strife now ensued, but Diliana remained firm to her resolve. So his Highness said, at last, that he would play the messenger himself, and journey off to the wedding the moment he had given orders to his chancellor respecting the change of Sidonia's sentence. He was better pleased not to be in the place when she was executed. Diliana could stay the night in the castle with his dear spouse, the Duchess, and the Knight might look after a place for himself. He would desire all the wedding guests to be ready to-morrow at mid-day for the bridal, and if Diliana and the Knight disliked riding, let them order a carriage from the Marshal of his stables, with fresh Frisian horses, and in a couple of hours they would be at Saatzig.

However, Diliana would not remain the night in the castle, but went to her cousin, the Lady of Matzke Bork, because her house stood not far from the place of execution, although the place itself was not visible, and my younker went down sorrowfully to the inn to pass the night there, but betimes in the morning was up and off to his dear little bride. He finds her in the second story, but no longer in her bridal magnificence; a black mourning garment

covered her entire person; and, when the Knight started in dismay at her appearance, she said—

“That no other robes beseemed a Bork when one of their race was going to her death; and she heard that the procession to the scaffold was to come that way from the Otterburg, and would pass in half an hour, therefore she was prepared to behold it. It was well that the scaffold itself was hidden from their sight; but would her dear George just go over and bid some one hoist a flag when the head of her cousin fell.

So the Knight did her will, but when he returned, said—

“Diliana, if thou givest me so many nuts to crack when we are married, methinks it will be an evil thing.”

To which she answered, mildly—

“No, dear George, after marriage it is the wife who cracks all the hard nuts, but to-day, dearest, it is thy office. I know not why, but I have a feeling over me to-day as if the soul of my poor grandmother would be at rest after this execution, and that Sidonia herself will be, in some sense, pardoned through the means of that death shift, No. 7; yet wherefore I think this, I know not.”

Just then a dull, hoarse, murmuring sound was heard in the distance, like the heaving of the waves when thunder is in the air, and the Lady Matzke's maid rushed in exclaiming—“She's coming! she's coming!” Then Diliana trembled and turned pale, but still advanced to the balcony with her cousin and the young Knight.

At length, the terrible sorceress herself appears in sight, accompanied by the school, chanting the death-psalm. She wore a white robe, seamed with black, and Diliana recognizes, with a shudder, that this is, indeed, Clara's shift, for she had herself thus stitched the seams in order to know it; but, besides, the No. 7 was plainly discernible on the neck. She walked barefoot, and round her head was bound a black fillet flowered with gold, from beneath which her long white hair fluttered in the wind.

Diliana contemplates all this awhile shudderingly, then covers her face with both hands, and sobs and weeps, so that the tears pour down through the delicate little fingers, and my

younger hath enough to do to comfort her. But when the procession disappears, she dries her eyes, re-enters the chamber, and folding her hands across her bosom, walks up and down, praying earnestly, until the red Danish flag shoots up. Then she sighed deeply, and drying her beautiful eyes, again said, softly—

“May God have mercy upon her soul, now her tortures are over!”

Scarcely are the words uttered ere a dense cloud of smoke ascends above the fisher’s house, rising higher and higher, like a lofty black tower in the air, so that they all conjectured—“Now she is burning on the pile,” and shuddered, yet are content withal, that at last her fearful life has ended.

Then they all knelt down, and repeated the Lord’s prayer; then rising, addressed themselves in earnest for their homeward journey.

And here with the death of Sidonia, I might justly close my book, merely stating in addition, that her ashes were laid in the burial ground for the poor, and that some time after the gentle Diliaua caused a tombstone to be erected over them, out of Christian charity and forgiveness. But as some say his Highness the Duke got his death at the wedding of Diliaua, I shall briefly narrate the facts here, to please the curious reader.

For the said Duke was so much taken with the Malmsey wine, that he sat up drinking the whole night, and next morning his legs were swelled to that degree that his boots had to be cut off with knives. So that when the bridal pair arrived, his Grace had to receive them in slippers, yet rejoiced much at hearing that all was over; and then, scarcely giving Diliaua time to recover herself, dispatched the whole company off to the church. Not however, without giving serious admonitions, both to the priest and the knight, George, not to let the ring drop. For if Dr. Luther, the thoughtless lubberhead, had not let the ring fall at the wedding of his grand-father in Forgau, it would have been better with him and his whole race, as his grand-mother of blessed memory had always said, and now indeed he saw she had been wisely.

Now my Jobst in the confusion of voices, hearing only the word "monk," thought his Grace was speaking of the monks' heads on the capitals of the pillars in the hall. So seeing two empty flasks, shouted, "Ay, that is for thee, monk!" and pitched them crash! crash! with such force up at the monks, that the pieces flew about the ears of the musicians who were to play before the bridal pair going to church, and a loud peal of laughter rang through the hall—after which they all set off for the wedding at last. And in truth this was a blessed marriage.

But respecting the illustrious and princely race of Pomerania, they perished each and all without leaving behind one single inheritor of their name or possessions. Not, methinks, because of the spell which the demonial sorceress laid on them, but because he loved this race so well, that he withdrew them from this evil world before the dreadful strifes, wars, and calamities came upon them, which our poor fatherland now endures. For before these storms broke over our heads, he called them one by one from this vale of tears, and truly, the first was his Highness Duke Francis, for in a few months after Sidonia's execution, after a brief illness on the 27th December, 1620, he fell asleep in God, aged 43 years, 8 months, and 3 days, without leaving children. The next was Bishop Udalricus, who likewise became suddenly ill at Pribbernow, near Stepnitz, with swollen body and limbs, and had to lie there until his death, on the 31st October, 1622, when to the great grief and consternation of the whole land, his young life closed at the early age of 34 years, and he too, left no children, though he had a young and beautiful spouse. The next who died, was Duke Philip Julius of Wolgast, the only son of Ernest Ludovicus and his spouse Hedwig. He was a wise and just ruler, but followed the others soon on the 16th February, 1625, aged only 40 years, 1 month, and 28 days—likewise, as all the rest, left no children.

But our Lord God hath not withdrawn so many and noble princes from the world, without sending forth strange and wonderful signs to forewarn the land; for without speaking of the great thunderclap which was heard all of a sudden in the middle of clear, fine weather the winter after

Sidonia's death, and the numberless mock suns that appeared in different places, or of that strange rain, when a sulphureous matter, like starch in appearance, fell from the air (item, a snow-white pike was caught at Colzow in Wellin, seven quarters long, and half an ell broad, with red round eyes, and red fins), a stranger wonder than all was seen at Wolgast; for suddenly, during a review held there, one of the soldier's muskets went off without a finger being laid on it, and the ball went right through the princely Pomeranian standard with such precision, that the arms seemed to have been cut out all round with a sharp knife. At Stettin also, in the castle-chapel, one of the crowns suspended over the stalls, fell down of itself, but still more awful was what happened respecting Bogislaus XIII. last father of all the Pomeranian princes. For all along by the pillars of the aisle, there are figures in armour representing the deceased dukes. And during the sermon one Sunday, the sword fell clanging to the ground from the hand of the armed figure representing Bogislaus XIII. though no human hand ever touched it. At this sight every one was troubled in spirit, but woe, alas! we now see what all these supernatural signs and wonders denoted! Yet still we have one noble prince remaining with the ancient blood of Pomerania in his veins. May the Lord God spare him long to us, and bless him like Abraham with a son in his old age. Such an Isaac would be a blessed sight to me; for when the last branch falls, I know that my poor heart will break also!

DR. THEODORUS PLÖNNIES.

CONCLUSION.

MOURNFUL DESTINY OF THE LAST PRINCELY POMERANIAN REMAINS.—MY VISIT TO THE DUCAL POMERANIAN VAULT IN WOLGAST, ON THE 6TH MAY, 1840.

BOGISLAFF the XIV. who as a truth-loving, amicable, and pious glossator, has annotated so many places in our text found this "last and happy hour," which he had so le

desired, on the 10th March, 1637. When he had attained the age of fifty-seven years, his death occurred at a period of unexampled misery, the like of which before or since was never seen in our whole German fatherland. Yet the destiny of the Zantalides which followed the princely Pomeranian house, seemed in no way propitiated even by their death. No; it raged, and rages still against the last poor remains of their mouldering clay. Bogislaff, during the horrors of the thirty years' war, remained for *seventeen* years unburied, because none of the princes who fought for the possession of Pomerania, would consent to bear the expense of the burial, and the land was too poor to take the cost upon itself. Yet his corpse suffered no further indignities like those of his princely kinsfolk of Wolgast. For after ninety-four years, we find him still lying calmly in his coffin, looking upward to his God through the little window which he so often sighed after. We shall first take a look at him before we descend into the Wolgast vault to contemplate the disgusting sacrilege which has been perpetrated and permitted there. Every reader of sensibility will feel interested in the following details which are taken from Oelrich's valuable work, "*Memorials of the Pomeranian Dukes*," page 87:—

"On the 19th of April, 1731, a royal commission opened the vault in the castle-church of Stettin, wherein many of the noble princes of Pomerania lay buried, and the coffin of Duke Bogislaff was broken open by especial command. The body was found quite perfect. Even the face was tolerably preserved, though the eyes had fallen in; for the skin had dried over the features, and the beard was long and somewhat red; the coffin was lined throughout with violet velvet (some say black) bordered with stones which had the appearance of turquoise. The corpse was dressed in a surplice, similar in form to that worn by priests at the present day, but fringed with silver, and likewise ornamented with turquoise. Upon the left hand there was a diamond ring and another. The diamond was quite pale, and the right hand was lying close to the side as if going to seize the dagger. Farther, they found a long and massive gold chain suspended round the neck, and upon the breast a

silver plate, like the bottom of a silver beaker upon which the Pomeranian arms were engraved.

"Beneath the coffin of this last Duke of Pomerania lay the ducal flag, but the pole was broken in two, either from design, or in consequence of decay; and above the coffin were remains of crape and mouldered fragments of velvet. *Lave anima pia!*

"But the Princely remains of Wolgast had indeed a mournful destiny. True; they were not left unburied for a number of years, but they were plundered and outraged, in such a disgraceful and revolting manner, by church-robbers, that it is impossible even to read the account of it in the Swedish protocol of 21st June, 1688; from which Heller gives extracts in his '*Chronicle of the Town of Wolgast*,' p. 346, without as much pain as emotion.*

"Yet the Swedish government seemed content to rest with the simple investigation, and took no trouble about, or showed the least respect for, the ashes of those to whom they were indebted for land and people. For the coffins lay there just as the robbers left them—broken open with axes and hatchets, or wrenched asunder with crowbars, and still lie in this state. However the vault was closed up, and no one was permitted to enter it unless in the presence of one of the reigning family; for this reason very few ever beheld these mournful remains. I myself would probably never have had an opportunity of so doing, only that the Prussian government resolved on building some additions to the Wolgast church; and, at the same time, desired the foundation to be evened, for it had sank in various places, and afterwards to wall up the princely vault for ever. In order to work at the foundation, it was necessary to remove the great stone which covered the entrance to the vault, and many along with myself availed themselves of this last opportunity to visit the interior. Therefore, on the day named above, I descended with deep emotion the steps that led to it. I found the vault was divided into two compartments, having vaulted roofs of about seven or eight feet high. In

* Only one of these robbers was seized—he was whipped and banished; the second hanged himself, and the other escaped. One was a Jew; the other two were the sexton and grave-digger of the church.

he first partition no coffin whatever was to be seen, but I could distinguish already the glitter of the tin coffins in the second compartment, which was reached by a further descent of a few steps, and lit up by the torches and lanterns of numerous visitors who had preceded me. The coffins were nine in number, and mostly covered with tin; each lay on a tressel of mason-work, and bore the marks, more or less, of the violence that had been employed to wrench them open.

"The strong Philip I. began the mournful range. A gentleman handed me his skull, in which scarcely a tooth was wanting. Then I searched in the adjoining coffin for that of his spouse Maria, 'my gracious Lady of Wolgast,' of Doctor Theodore's History. I found it, took it in the other hand, and cannot describe the strange feeling which came over me.

"When I had indulged some time in strange and deep emotions, I laid down the honourable relics again in their coffins, and stepped to that of Earnest Ludovick, the unfortunate lover of the still more unfortunate Sidonia. According to the protocol of 1688, which I held in my hand, there was to be seen there a violet velvet mantle, and a cap without anything inside. There they were—nothing more to find—all fallen in dust, the weak head as the weak heart! Close to him lay his unfortunate wife, Sophia Hedwig of Brunswick, both the most beautiful persons of their time.

"But my interest was excited most by the contemplation of Philip Julius, the last Duke of Pommern-Wolgast, who has only received a passing notice in this Book, but who was one of the most gifted, and probably the most lamented Prince of his thousand-year-old race. His coffin was of far costlier workmanship than the others, and decorated with a row of gilded angel's heads; near it stood the black wooden tressel, upon which it had originally been placed, and which looked as fresh as if it had been only just placed there, instead of having lain in the vault for two hundred and fifteen years. A strange sensation crept over me! We were both silent, till at last the gentleman began to search with his hand in the grey mouldering dust, and along with some

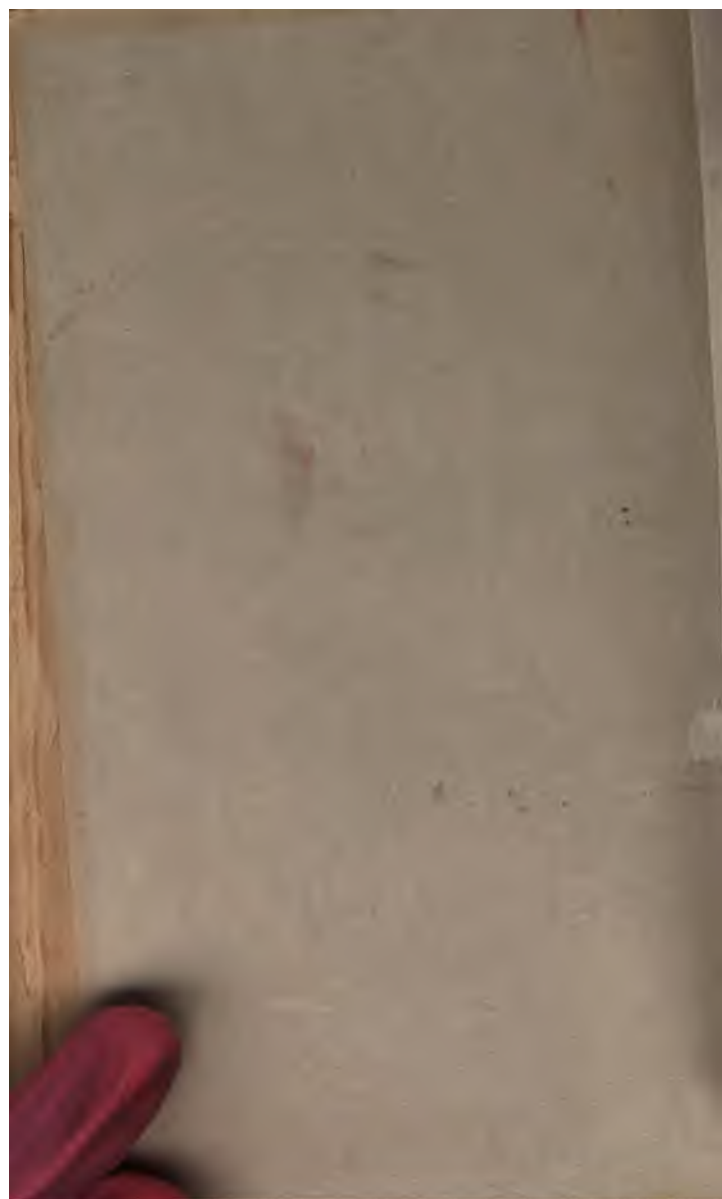
rag of velvet, he brought up a damp, discoloured scrap of paper, which he carelessly tore; but I instantly seized it, and joined the pieces together again, for the signification of such little notes in the coffins of old times was not unknown to me.

"And, in fact, I found what I sought; there was not only marked on it the date of the Duke's burial, the *6th of May*, which had a mystic significance to me, since it was on the very 6th of May that I was now standing to contemplate these mute, yet eloquent graves, but also there was noted down the text from which the funeral sermon had been preached (2 Tim. iv. 7), as well as the list of the Psalms sung on the occasion, among which the closing Psalm—'When sorrow assails thee,' is still to be found in most hymn-books. But my poor old Pomeranian heart could bear no more: I placed the paper again in the coffin; and, while the tears poured from my eyes as I ascended the steps, those beautiful old verses came into my head, and I could not help reciting them aloud:—

'So must human pomp and state
In the grave lie desolate.
He who wore the kingly crown,
With the base worm lieth down:
Ermined robe, and purple pall,
Leaveth he at death's weird call.

'Fleeting, cheating human life,
Souls are perilled in thy strife;
Yet the pomps in which we trust,
All must perish!—dust to dust.
God alone will ever be;
Who serves Him reigns eternally!'"

THE END.



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